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This survey of reading material for elementary students covers over 320 books from 38 publishers, more than three-fourths published since 1957. The books reviewed were offered by their publishers as "books with stories or interesting information, with simple sentence structure, reasonably limited vocabulary, and a measure of repetition--for those readers at first, second, or third grade level whose skills are gradually developing; books mainly for independent reading." They are discussed under four headings to illustrate the content and characteristics appropriate for children's books: what qualities identify children's books, what can be expected of these books, what they are about, and what they offer for first grade. All books discussed, 100 additional books, and publishers are listed. (LH)

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BOOKS FOR BEGINNING READERS

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TE 001 388

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CONTENTS

Page

INTRODUCTION

ONE WHAT THEY ARE LIKE: HOW TO IDENTIFY THEM 1

They Answer a Need 1
They Have Definite Earmarks 2
They Are of Many Kinds 4
They Set Some Criteria 5
They Have Additional Uses 5
There Were Early Examples 6

TWO WHAT TO EXPECT OF THEM 9

Appropriate Vocabulary 9
Desirable Repetition 11
Ranging Reading Levels 12
Suitable Make-up 14
Pleasing Pictures 15
Varying Form and Content 17
Acceptability Factors 20

THREE WHAT THEY ARE ABOUT 23

Realism and Fantasy in Fiction 23
Relation to School Activities, Seasons, and Special Days 26
Sources and Themes 28
Ancient Tales 31
Folk Tales 32
Animals, Made-up and Truly Ones 33
Books of Information 36
Science 37
Children of Other Countries 40
Negro Children 42

FOUR WHAT THEY OFFER FOR FIRST GRADE 45

Pictures That Tell 45
Language That Charms 47
Things That One Knows 49
Parts One Can Read 50

BIBLIOGRAPHY 53
BOOK LIST 55
LIST OF PUBLISHERS 71

INTRODUCTION

This survey of books for beginners was undertaken primarily to explore a new movement in the children's book field, that of providing interesting material for children with relatively immature skills to read on their own initiative. The list tends to be inclusive rather than selective because the need for these books, so long apparent, has only begun to be met. Other lists emphasizing beginning books are noted in the bibliography.

Of the more than 320 books listed from thirty-eight different sources, more than three-fourths have been published since 1957, and nearly all since 1950. The books reviewed here were offered by their publishers when informed that the pamphlet would list

> Books with stories or interesting information, with simple sentence structure, reasonably limited vocabulary, and a measure of repetition—for those readers at first, second, or third grade level whose skills are gradually developing; books mainly for independent reading.

Some books that seemed at first not to belong have been included to challenge the most mature primary readers, to suggest material for adults to share with children, and, in a very few cases, to show what a beginning book is not.

Certain fairly obvious factors work against readability, even in books designed to be easy. Thus, books were eliminated because they included unfamiliar ideas, characters, situations, or language patterns; presented over-sophisticated humor or a complicated story-line; dealt with a way of life too remote for young readers to grasp; or showed a lack of understanding of children's ways of thinking and feeling. Some were also excluded because they were poorly written, had page make-up which did not consider the *seeing* needs of readers, or had cluttered and garish illustrations; a very few, because as factual books they seemed unsubstantial, or packaged the information unnecessarily in story and conversation.

Certain text-type books have been included, even though in some cases the style is pedestrian, because they present content that challenges interest and at the same time they are easy to read.

Those few older books, long recognized, that were submitted as meeting beginning reading requirements have been included. To locate all the older worthwhile productions that could serve as beginning-to-read books would be a study in itself, but the list of such volumes probably would not be long. Many superior books, long known to librarians and teachers, are not usable as read-for-myself books but will continue to be read and used for other important reasons. The teacher, librarian, or parent may draw upon all the richness of established collections for reading aloud to the children.

Possible uses of some books for reading aloud are mentioned for specific reasons, particularly because such sharing of reading is necessary during the earliest stages of the child's reading (chapter four).

Basically, the criteria applied in selecting books reviewed in this pamphlet are based on readability, in terms of both form and interest, but teachers will find the qualities of permanence in many of the beginning books. For felicity of expression, for vigorous storytelling, for soundness of values, for truth to human emotions and relationships, for free-ranging imagination, for poetic thought and phrasing, for magic of pictures, the style of format and print, for fact telling in informational books, with interest, with authenticity, and selection pointed to young readers—for all these the reader is referred to individual books mentioned for their outstanding qualities, particularly in chapters two or three.

ONE What They Are Like: How to Identify Them

They Answer a Need

The wordless appeal of the six-, seven-, eight-year-old, initiated into reading but laboring with limited vocabulary and rudimentary skills, has long been, "Give me books with good stories, with people like me in them, with interesting happenings, with pictures that help me understand the story, with not too many new words—books that I can read over and over because they are funny, or exciting, or tell me about things; books I-can-read-for-myself."

Perhaps teachers and librarians have been helping to phrase the appeal, in teacher-librarian language: books with memorable characters and situations; stories with action, suspense, and climax; information clearly written, clearly pictured, and often about the children's own here and now; language clear to the reader—sentences generally short and in normal word order; desirable, natural repetition; fine illustrations interpreting the text, not avant-garde art, nor cheap and cluttered color; attractive pages with good spacing, glareless paper, plain but bold type—"seeable" text.

The books anticipating the beginning book movement (see pages 6-7) had come, it would seem, by happy chance, but suddenly publishers were developing whole lines of books for beginning readers.

The trickle of these books that appeared in the middle fifties grew to a flood tide after 1957. Realism, fantasy, information, and humor now vie for a place on primary reading tables. For some children in the first year of school, for many in the second, and for multitudes in the third, these books comprise a whole new library for their independent reading.

The teacher's hope of developing real readers lies in stimulating interest, initiating the pupils into the process of reading, and then supplying the materials and the guidance for their further growth. Her goal is to have children delight in books, and to develop in each child as early as possible the desire to read for himself, to read on his own initiative, even though he must seek help. Children whose school reading is limited to class and group work seldom make real readers.

However, teachers who have wished to broaden at once the child's base of reading experience with additional materials have in the past found few books for the purpose other than individual copies of supplementary texts. In schools with library facilities, "easy" books have been available, highly pictured, usually, with small amounts of text, some with much, but typically not having all the requirements of a book planned to be read for himself by the child at a low reading level.

There have been, of course, in the best schools and homes, "read-to-me" books appealing to the interests of young children, with language suited to their listening, with ideas and situations that the adult reader might help to interpret through words and intonation.

Different from both the picture-book and the read-to-me book, though it partakes of the qualities of both, is the book that the beginner can read on his own initiative, with maximum aid from the pictures, with minimum vocabulary for the subject treated, with simple sentence structure, and often with much repetition; a book he can read *for* himself, although not necessarily *by* himself.

They Have Definite Earmarks

How do teachers, parents, and others know that a book is a beginning book, that it is suitable for a child of six, seven, or eight with limited skills and vocabulary, and an interest range related to his experience? How do they know that this is something he can read mainly on his own initiative and that he will read it because it appeals?

The beginning books have characteristics, more or less definite, and of course these are shared always in some measure with all books that children like. These books are *written* as are books for older children and adults—not built around vocabulary to be mastered; they have plot, idea, theme; they deal with situations appreciated by young children, with life as they see it, or fancy as they can take it; such books are usually rereadable.

Over and over readers can relive the suspense of *Small Clown* (Nancy Faulkner), *Hurry, Hurry* (Edith Thacher Hurd), or *The Boy Who Couldn't Roar* (Grace Berquist). Often the books lend themselves to dramatization as *It's a Deal* (Poul Stroyer) or *Wanted, a Brother* (Gina Bell). In general the pictures have reality (see page 15), though one finds such exceptions as *The Cantankerous Crow* (Lennart Hellsing and Poul Stroyer) translated from the Swedish, with its crows that are just flashes of color and lightly appended wings and feet.

Readability at the early levels, of course, depends much on vocabulary control, on repetition, on length and structure of sentences, on the amount, size, and spacing of print on a page, and on the breaking of the text material into paragraphs or brief thought units. Yet story and fact value, manner of telling, and illustration take precedence over language control and physical make-up. What the reader desires must come first.

In fiction, children like books with action, dramatic quality, suspense, even mystery, and satisfying conclusions. They like people and events of the real world, yet they like also to range far and wide in imagination. Their interests range over animals and machines, heroes and fairies, people of now and of long ago, children like themselves and children that are different. In informational books, they like their facts challenging and exciting, but understandable, and with a touch of the familiar. In both story and fact books, children are best able to take off from where they are.

The readers' own emotional needs must be met vicariously. *Little Bear* (Else Holmelund Minarik) must have parents who love and understand him. Jonathan must succeed in getting his trained turtle into the *Pet Parade* (James Ayers); *Small Clown* (Nancy Faulkner) must become a clown like his father; Freddy in *Who Will Be My Friends?* (Syd Hoff) must win acceptance and playmates.

The power of the beginning book, nevertheless, as a learning-to-read book lies not alone in the appeal of the content, but also in the child's growing realization that he can read a book for himself, in his inclination to turn to the library table and seek out a book on his own.

The importance of the small reader's sense of I-can-read-it-myself accounts for the starkness of content and language in books like *A Trip to the Zoo* (Isabelle Groetzinger), *Fun on the Farm* (Gladys McHorne), *I Like Birds* (Dorothy Joslyn), and others of this series.

They Are of Many Kinds

Variety is the most marked characteristic of the beginning books. Some, like *Come to the Farm* (Ruth Tensen), use preprimer-primer style text to give the child the satisfaction of being able to read on his own as in,

Bow-wow
We want to play.
Where are all our friends?
Will you come and play?

But it is the numberless photographs in this and the companion volumes *Come to the City* (Tensen) and *Come to the Zoo* (Tensen) that really supply the content.

Informational books not only are increasing in number but also are more and more skillfully adapted to the level of younger readers. Straight facts are given in *Time Is When* (Beth Youman Gleick),

At night you sleep.
While you are sleeping
A new day begins.

While this language is of the simplest, it has a winning quality unlike the prosaic style of many factual books. The pictures are appealing, too, and interpret perfectly the spirit of the text. The two lines,

September is the end of summer
and the start of fall,

are accompanied by pictures of leaf-burning so entrancing that all young readers will surely burn up their towns come next October.

Successful stories that teach facts through fantasy are rare, but *The Boy Who Got Mailed* (Bill and Rosalie Brown) and *A Bear Is a Bear* (Inez Hogan) do it well. Peter, who got mailed with $3.79 in stamps on his forehead, and a label, *This end up,* to his aunt in Kansas, experiences all the processes of the mail. Usable by second graders who visit the post office in their study of the mail, the book is not in primary format and appeals to older children as well. *A Bear Is a Bear* tells of a self-important grizzly who learned in his travels that there are many kinds of bears.

Then, as a special kind of approach, there is the complete nonsense of Dr. Seuss, who only by sheer ingenuity overcame the handicap of starting with a word list. Some of his imitators have not overcome it and, though patterning after *The Cat in the Hat,* have produced foolishness instead.

All these approaches serve a purpose, but unless the books are interesting in content, attractive in make-up, and appealing in illustrations, they seldom accomplish other purposes with young readers.

They Set Some Criteria

In selecting any books for children, the adult will naturally ask of a science or other factual book, "Will the children use it often?" The answer is in such books as *The Tall Grass Zoo* (Winifred and Cecil Lubbell). Its rhythmic prose and black and white sketches against lightly colored backgrounds give information about frogs, ants, caterpillars, ladybugs, and other denizens of the grass. The youngest can pore over it, identifying the creatures; able second graders can read and reread it; third graders and older children will return to it often for reference.

Of fiction, the question is "Will they read it over and over?" and the answer is in books like the well-known *The Big Snow* (Berta and Elmer Hader) and in *When the Cows Got Out* (Dorothy Koch), which is memorable not only for its direct story and for Tim's sense of responsibility but also for beautiful design and illustrations. Paul Lanz's brushwork, detailed down to the barbs on the wire fence and the knotholes in the barn planks, is set against color brightened or softened to show the hour of the day and the mood.

To the question "Is it playable?" there are Paul Galdone's *The Old Woman and Her Pig, Who Will Be My Friends?* (Syd Hoff), and *The Goings On at Little Wishful* (Warren Miller). "Is it applicable?" many young readers have said. "Sometimes *Nobody Listens to* . . . me either!"

They Have Additional Uses

These books, of course, have uses in addition to primary reading. As books for oral reading, some appeal to preschool children; as easy books for rapid gains in vocabulary and in speed, many are usable in the intermediate grades. Elements of plot and suspense, information and fun in some of the books appeal to older children with slowly developing reading skills. Many pupils, even of junior high school age, need very simple books. For one or two pupils so retarded, or for a remedial reading class, the teacher may find some of these books usable. *I Want to Be an Airline Hostess* (Carla Greene), with simple language, large type, and highly informative pictures, could be interesting reading for older, educationally retarded girls. The hostess is grown up, the information about her work is challenging, and a whole array of splendid uniforms, for different airlines, is pictured. Older slow-to-read children will find the straightforward style of *Christopher Columbus* (Clara Ingram Judson) to their liking and his adventures within their understanding.

Sailor Jack and Bluebell (Selma and Jack Wasserman), with the grown-up sailors, the big ship, the atomic submarine, and the reckless parrot, appeals to older children as well as to first graders. It has, perhaps, its best use in classes for retarded readers and with group procedure. The pictures furnish content and stimulate discussion. Bluebell also appears in *Sailor Jack,* which is simpler but has less incident.

These two books present the dangers and excitements of today while *Dan Frontier* (William Hurley) and *Dan Frontier Goes Hunting* (Hurley) recreate the adventures of past time in a setting of forest and field. *Bucky Button* (Edith S. McCall) and *The Buttons and the Whirlybird* (McCall) are blue collar family stories. These books are part of the total list that includes the inimitable *Cowboy Sam* (Edna W. Chandler) and *Cowboy Sam and Freddy* (Chandler) among the earliest used by teachers seeking material for the children who make progress slowly in reading. They are usable by the younger children for independent reading.

There Were Early Examples

While the production of beginning books is presently a deliberate movement, good stories have been told for many years to satisfy some of the needs of beginning readers. *Merry Animal Tales* (Madge A. Bingham), recently reissued with its original pictures, was published first in 1906. The story of the rats and their feud with the fat cook and the fat cat presents Blackie Blackrat, his amiable father, and his anxious mother, and just the kind of situations in which a small boy would find himself.

Cherry Tree Children (Mary Frances Blaisdell) and *Bunny Rabbit's Diary* (Blaisdell), first published in 1915, although they lack the story value of *Merry Animal Tales,* remain readable today. These older books have a quiet, slowpaced charm. The characters behave as people do, but children like such animal stories along with the more realistic ones.

The Little Red Lighthouse and the Great Gray Bridge (Hildegarde Swift and Lynd Ward), classic story of the lighthouse that found it was needed despite the great flashlight turning on top of the new bridge, published in 1942, is just as appealing today. Another classic, *The Five Chinese Brothers* (Claire Huchet Bishop and Kurt Wiese), a simple retelling at about second grade level of an ancient tale, was published in 1938.

Little Toot (Hardie Gramatky) appeared in 1939. Story and pictures were designed for children too young to read, but no child should miss this extravaganza of the river, harbor, and sea, and the frivolous little tugboat that rose to a big occasion. *Creeper's Jeep*, 1948, (Gramatky) lends human characteristics to machinery and endows it with reason as well as emotion. The author's own pictures enliven the humor.

Churchmouse Stories (Margot Austin) reprints five of the author-illustrator's books in one volume. *The Three Silly Kittens*, first published in 1950, with its one-page episodes and simple language, suits second grade reading level while the remaining stories are better for listening.

Bear Twins (Inez Hogan) launched in 1935 Inez Hogan's long list of twin stories. *A Day at School* (Agnes McCready) was published in 1936. *A Puppy for Keeps* (Quail Hawkins), easy and factual, presaged in 1943 a multitude of stories on the theme of a child's desire for a pet.

TWO What to Expect of Them

Appropriate Vocabulary

Vocabulary has much to do with ease of reading. *Indian Two Feet and His Horse* (Margaret Friskey) has very few words to a page to the tune of

> There was
> a little Indian.
> He wished
> he had a horse.

The story is completely developed in 400 running words, a total of about 130 different words, of which fewer than twenty-five have more than one syllable. Such a limitation might have resulted in an artificial story. But Little Two Feet is very natural as in trying to find a horse he follows his father's advice "to think like a horse." Imagination of the small boy sort enters into the solution when the horse finds *him* asleep in the shadow of a rock.

Some writers have made extraordinary effort to tell a story in few words. *All About Dogs, Dogs, Dogs* (Grace Skaar) has only sixteen different words, and so has *Nothing But Cats, Cats, Cats* (Skaar). In *A Very Little Dog* (Skaar) there are only eighty words, and in *What Do They Say?* (Skaar) but fifty words. Each is told in the simplest style.

While the theme in each of these books, the illustrations, and the whole appeal are to the nursery school age, kindergarten children will delight in the pictures, and first graders will be lured into reading by the few words, the bold, plain-faced type with plenty of white space, and the simple sentence structure.

Put Me in the Zoo (Robert Lopshire) can justifiably be included in beginning books only by the extravagant humor expressed in the pictures, not by the fact that it uses but 100 words. Its use of the first person, its verse form, and its exclamatory style result in phraseology that the small reader cannot anticipate. Readability depends not merely on limitation of words but also on how they are put together.

On the other hand, the 100 words of *Are You My Mother?* (P. D. Eastman) is used in brief, direct sentences with normal word order, to tell a story that is a story. It has successive, surprising episodes and parenthetic summaries which provide for natural repetition; it introduces characters known by name as well as nature from *kitten* to *airplane;* it has a logical and satisfying conclusion. The fact that as nature lore it is arrant nonsense interferes not at all with its story value or its readability.

Where Is Everybody? (Remy Charlip) is indeed something different. The first page, blank, is captioned "Here is an empty sky," and the second has a bird, in simplest line drawing, within the sentence, "A bird flies up into the sky." The sun appears next, and the pictures are cumulative until we have hills, sky, river, fish, tree, road, deer, house, man, boy, boat, and rain cloud. Then the rain falls and blots them out, one by one. The last pages are black except for the falling rain. The appeal lies more in the implied story and in the ingenious construction than in the ease of reading. Such sentences as "A rain cloud floats by in the sky" and "There is a river at the foot of the hills" are not easy for the beginner.

While all these books give attention to vocabulary, in most of them words appear that are not in anyone's selective list. The writers recognize that while monosyllables should predominate in easy books, *giraffe* is probably as easily learned as *horse*. The significance of the word to the reader lies in its meaningful setting, the on-going sweep of the story, the place of the word in the context, and its relation to the pictures.

Teachers and parents, observing children's reading, know that it is easier for the child to learn *elephant* as a sight word than to distinguish between *was* and *saw,* but this would not justify introducing as new words *elephant, rhinoceros, giraffe,* and *hippopotamus* on one page. To avoid the use of words perfectly clear from illustrations and context and to substitute colorless words are not the best means of vocabulary control. For instance, in *Dan Frontier Goes Hunting* (page 6) Dan says, "Jimmy got apples for me to eat. I have *this* to eat, too." In the picture he holds ears of corn in his hands. *This* is certainly not easier in the context than *corn,* nor is the circumlocution, "They went to a tree with Blacky and King," easier than what the picture clearly shows, "They tied Blacky and King to a tree."

On the other hand, the author uses a kind of omission which, while it does not make for literary style, keeps the reading easy and allows the reader to fill in the words or sentences omitted. "Dan's gun was not ready. But Dan was ready for the bear." (Picture shows Dan hurling rock and bear departing!) The small reader can, of course, supply "He threw a rock at the bear," anticipating the next sentence, "The bear went away."

Vocabulary is not always the chief factor of difficulty. A second grader rejected *Who Has Seen the Wind?* (Marion Conger) as having "a lot of hard words," but he did not find the words hard when they were examined with him. Nor did the sentences, some of them three lines long, baffle him. The material just was not within his range of interest. The story contains little action; rather it follows Mary's conversation about the wind with her mother, the milkman, the mailman, and finally with her father. A child seeking someone who has seen the wind is a delicate, poetic theme to be realized best through listening to appreciative reading by an adult.

Familiarity with concepts and characters as well as vocabulary makes for ease of reading. *Are You My Mother?* (P. D. Eastman) tells a story, no matter how fanciful, of a baby bird that asks of kitten, hen, dog, cow, plane, train, boat, and steam shovel—all things of the child's real world, "Are you my mother?" until he finds his own mother. This has story, it has sequence, and despite its imaginative quality, it deals with things the child knows. *The Boy Who Could Not Say His Name* (Elizabeth Vreeken) ingeniously weaves into the story the names of a dozen or more story characters, from Peter Rabbit to Davy Crockett, whom second grade children know.

Desirable Repetition

Repetition makes for ease of reading. In *No Fighting, No Biting!* (Else Holmelund Minarik), Cousin Joan, the babysitter, tells Willy and Rosa a story in which little alligators pester each other exactly as the two children have been pestering each other. In *Fierce John*

(Edward Fenton), the cumulative style carries forward the story of the boy who found many ways of being a lion. In each recapitulation, words, phrases, and sentences are repeated.

In *Will You Come to My Party?* (Sara Asheron) the considerable repetition culminates in a pleasant surprise ending, but the early pages leading up to Little Gray Squirrel's decision to have a picnic might have been omitted for a structurally better story.

The Range in Reading Levels

Books for beginners, so designated by their publishers, are not geared to a single level. Follett Beginning-To-Read books assign the the level, for instance: first level *Something New at the Zoo* (Esther K. Meeks), second level *Mabel the Whale* (Patricia King), and third level *Peter's Policeman* (Anne Lattin). Harper, with their I-Can-Read books started a new series of Early-I-Can-Read books; *Who Will Be My Friends?* (Syd Hoff), *Albert the Albatross* (Hoff), and *Cat and Dog* (Else Holmelund Minarik) are examples. Random House has some Beginning Beginners! *Are You My Mother?* (P. D. Eastman) is one of them.

The need is still greatest for books at the first grade level, for the 1-1's hopefully, and for the 1-2's certainly. The preprimer and primer tend to preempt the field for all but exceptional six-year-olds. The first grade children acquire reading vocabularies slowly, and all their skills are in beginning stages. Some usable books are found at first grade level, however, and they tend to have certain characteristics. Titles offer a special relation of words and pictures as in *My Red Umbrella* (Robert Bright), familiarity of the tale as in *The Old Woman and Her Pig* (il. Paul Galdone), or a particularly "sayable" quality to the prose that lends itself to memorization as in *Everything Is Somewhere* (Mircea Vasiliu).

Among the books that will be read by first grade children who have gained some skills and some sight vocabulary are *Indian Two Feet and His Horse* (Margaret Friskey), *How a Seed Grows* (Helene J. Jordan), and *When I Grow Up* (Lois Lenski). (See **What They Offer for First Grade,** pages 45-52.)

In the list accompanying this pamphlet a single point has been used to indicate the level of difficulty, although, of course, practically every book will be used at several grade levels. If the list seems upgraded in general, it is because the books supplied in most class situations—texts, supplementaries, library books—are too difficult for many children. Writers, editors, publishers, librarians, and school administrators may have tended in the past to judge the placement of books in terms of their own children's interests, fostered in literate homes, whereas by far the largest numbers of school children in the United States come from homes that furnish meager literary background.

On the other hand, more difficult books have not been eliminated. Many are included in the list and rated 3-3 because some eight-year-olds are sure to find them just right. Whenever one of these books has been placed tentatively at fourth and fifth grade level, invariably a third grader has been found who read it with ease and satisfaction.

If used as primers, with group teaching, many of these books can be read during the second half of the first school year. However, they serve their best purpose when they contribute to the child's job in "a book I can read for myself," even with help with the reading. Time and the teacher's attention are important to children who are doing individual reading in the classroom. Some simple techniques, appropriate to the material and the purposes of these books, also can make the home reading not only enjoyable but also a help in learning to read. (See pages 45 and ff.)

It's Really Nice! (Louis Pohl), a tiny book in blue, green, and orange, is in verse, appealing to the nursery age; yet because of the telling pictures, the appropriate age of the child depicted, and the small amount of text per page, it will become a read-for-myself book after a few hearings by the six-year-old or by the beginning second grader.

Everybody Has a House (Mary McBurney Green) is frankly a picture book with little vocabulary control, but the sequence of the pictures and the anticipation of the *house* of each character make for easy reading. Departure from the stated purpose also is forgiven in *A Fly Went By* (Mike McClintock), a reversal of the old theme "The sky is falling." Suspense leads the reader from page to page; violent action stirs excitement; pictures tell the story in perfect sequence, even while verse form distorts slightly the normal word order. Parts of the story the young reader can read for himself when someone is sharing his efforts:

The fly ran away
In fear of the frog,
Who ran from the cat
Who ran from the dog.

But he probably cannot read the verse that follows:

> One ran from the other,
> The other ran, too,
> From one who came after.
> Now what could I do?

The second and third lines are unfamiliar language patterns and must be interpreted by the tone and inflection of the older reader. The child's delight in the story, however, will call for many rereadings; he will, without intention, memorize many of the more directly expressed passages. This, if skillfully handled by the adult "helper," can be made a definite stage of learning to read.

The level stated in the list is tentative, based on the judgment of the writer—supplemented by the experience of primary teachers. Most of the books have value at different levels (page 12). Teachers teach in very different situations, and children progress in reading at very different rates. Some first grade children can read second grade books in the latter half of the year; some second graders can read fourth grade books by the middle of the year; and some third graders know little limit. Conversely, some third and fourth grade children can read only books at first grade level, and a few second grade children have scarcely made a beginning.

Suitable Make-Up

Page make-up has much to do with ease of reading. Most of the books examined use print of appropriate size, good spacing, plain type, and wide margins, and the pages generally are uncluttered. In these respects the books are patterned on the school text rather than on picture-book or story-book style.

Type has much to do with the eye-appeal of a book. *Where Do You Live?* (Eva Knox Evans) has a type face perfect for its purpose. Each grouping of sentences is in perfect proportion and, set against a softly colored page, seems as much a part of the picture as the drawings themselves. This offsets in a measure a certain verbal effervescence that moves the book up into the second grade reading level while the appeal is to the younger child:

> Suddenly Mike heard a little something.
> He saw a little something.
> He saw a little jump-jumping rabbit.

Type is sometimes deceptive to those who choose materials for the Easy Book sections of libraries. Plain bold type and limited text do not, in *One Is Good But Two Are Better* (Louis Slobodkin), make it an easy reading book. "One can swing alone in the sun, But you need two to have more fun" is not signified in the picture and is not an inevitable "next word."

Pleasing Pictures

The books designed for beginning readers are illustrated with humor and imagination, sometimes even wild exaggeration. But, for the most part, they picture the elements of the story in representative terms. In *Fierce John* (Edward Fenton), the six-year-old is a very real small boy with realistic ambitions. But the artist has created remarkable lions, and Fierce John adds to his fierceness with his appurtenances—a mop-head for a mane, a frazzled rope for a tail tucked in the back of his pajamas, and nails thrust through the fingers of his mittens for claws. So intriguing is this story, so directly related to the imagination of small boys, and so suggestive as to action, that the reader is likely to take a turn at being a lion.

A Jungle in the Wheatfield (Egon Mathieson) is a study in color. The illustrations look like crayon drawings. A single grasshopper sports light yellow, navy blue, light green, dark green, deep orange, and red, and a cheerful snake wears a fantastic array of colors. The story suggests, perhaps, that the little boy creeping through the tall grass dozed and imagined flowers with faces, moles that complained, and lions—well, the lion turned into the lost pussy cat he was looking for. This and other Astor books use colors lavishly, in all shades and tints, clear, bright, and sharply separated.

Pictures aid interpretation in *A Dog for Susie* (Ruth Nordlie). Susie names her possible pets—*kitten, turtle, monkey, pig*—and arrives at *dog*. Each of these words is accompanied by a picture. When she goes to the kennels to select, she sees *a big dog, a small dog, a tall dog, a long dog*. Here not only the picture but also the size and shape of the type suggest the word. At the end of the story are two pages of dog faces, labeled *Collie, Bloodhound, Pekinese,* and the like. With a little help the reader may find this section a fascinating game of learning words from pictures.

Pictures and text must be consistent in the age of the child represented. In *The Cowboy Twins* (Florence and Louis Slobodkin), Ned and Donny take off on cowboy adventures to the confusion of other people as well as their parents. The boys pictured are five or six, perhaps, and the nature of their play is even younger, but the text, while simple and straightforward, is upper second or third grade level. On the other hand, *A Letter for Cathy* (Kathyrn Hitte) deals with a child just under school age whose writing is in the "squiggle" stage. The pictures of Cathy are appropriate to her age, but the story also is acceptable to the first or second grader who remembers this stage of his own writing.

Emmett's Pig (Mary Stolz) is refreshing in that the illustrations are neither cartoons nor caricatures. Emmett and his parents look like real people. Furthermore, the pigs look like pigs.

Specialists in children's literature, librarians, teachers, and parents, as well as editors and illustrators, disagree as to the value of some of the modern art in children's books, especially that which seeks bizarre effects. There is little of this problem in the beginning books. Some of the illustrators make use of garish and unnatural color, some of grotesque effects in size and shape, yet generally the artists picture what they set out to picture. Most of the books tend to beauty of pictures, in proportion, color, mass, and line. A few efforts are experimental, in educational purpose, perhaps, rather than in media or technique.

Little Blue and Little Yellow (Leo Lionni), and how they became green when they hugged each other, is a venture into abstraction for very young children. The torn paper illustrations suggest characters and story; the pages have very simple text; the material fits the child's developing understanding of color, even to some appreciation of depth and range of color—for there is light brown as well as dark brown, deep red as well as clear red, a pale pink which obviously has a touch of yellow—and yellowish green as well as purplish red. The whole suggests play with torn or cut paper or with splashes of paint which may lead the children to creative work on their own part.

The pictures in the beginning books serve many purposes. They may induce a mood, as in *Lonely Maria* (Elizabeth Coatsworth); they may agitate the risibilities, as in *Just for Fun* (Patricia Scarry). In this last are fifteen miniature dramas in which small animals, instead of children, are the actors. The words once supplied will be remembered because of their precise relationship to the pictures. In another type of illustration, pictures may establish the background. In *Little Lone Coyote* (Wilma Pitchford Hays), Wesley Dennis's pictures create the bleak country setting in which Fred tries to rear and keep his pet. *In Geeta and the Village School* (P. T. Thampi), the pictures help to create the Indian village, and in *A First Look at the Country in Spain* (A. J. M. Aguirre), even the child who cannot read may understand the vividly pictured life and landscape of rural Spain.

Sometimes text and book design achieve perfect unity. *Lee Fong and His Toy Junk* (William Carmichael), is hand-lettered in readable, "seeable" manuscript. The text and the exquisite line drawings seem to all be one. The black lines and letters, standing out on the buff-tinted pages, and the red dust cover make a beautiful book in conventional style.

Hand-lettering is not always readable, however. In Inez Hogan's two twins series, among the earliest books to use simple story-line and easy language, readability was reduced in some of the volumes by the hand-lettering. The plain bold type without serifs used in the latest of the series is much more readable.

Pictures can aid the reading in very specific ways. In *The King Who Learned to Smile* (Seymour Reit) certain pages read like lists of things that children know,

They gave him gold rugs
and gold mugs.
They gave him gold bells
and gold shells.

As each item is elaborately pictured, the child, once he has the cue, can read such a page for himself.

Almost all of the beginning books are sturdily made. Even *I Like Birds* (Dorothy Joslyn) and the other small books of this series have durable, washable, paper over cardboard covers, and they open flat, adding to the life of a child's book. Many of them are in special school and library binding; most are in standardized sizes rather than in the out-sizes or odd-sizes of many trade books.

Varying Form and Content

As material for young children with limited reading skills, the books reviewed show astonishing variety. While most of them are conventional in style, a few are different. *David and the Giant* (Mike McClintock) is not only in verse but it is also written in the second person,

David, play on your harp and sing,
Sing sweet and low for Saul the King.

This form scarcely promotes readability. The inevitability of the next word in straight narrative, the story-line that carries the reader along, are lacking. Even children familiar with the story need help in reading this version. Yet to develop the story in this style and keep it simple required ingenuity as well as creative approach.

The second person is used also in *You Will Go to the Moon* (Mae and Ira Freeman) to bring the excitement of space travel into the realm of probability. Written by scientists and based on present knowledge, it uses among its 186 words, *weightless, centrifugal force, inertia,* and these are indeed part of the language of today's children. A supplement explains these and several other scientific terms, no doubt on the assumption that the adult who selects the book or assists the child to read it may also need help.

Book of Laughs (Bennet Cerf) is a series of anecdotes all involving a small boy named Marvin. The humor is pleasing both to adults and children; Marvin only rarely is "smarty." His reactions are usually genuine as when the farmer offers him a "chicken to take home to eat," and Marvin gladly accepts but questions, "What does she eat?" Simple pictures are a relief to eye and mind after the forced fancifulness of many illustrations. These jokes in simple wording that young children can read for themselves are a real contribution.

Collections of stories are few among the beginning books. *Every Child's Story Book* (Margaret Martignoni, editor) contains selections from many modern stories. The first is from *Angus and the Ducks.* There are many modern verses and some old ones, among them "A is for Apple Pie." The materials are arranged in the order of difficulty. A few would be read by second grade children, and many by third, but the book would be found most often in the hands of parent or teacher.

Once Upon a Holiday (Lilian Moore) is a collection of stories and verses. The Columbus story begins with three boys playing spaceship in the back yard and contending about who is to blast off first into outer space. The mother of one settles them by telling them of Columbus, who ventured into the unknown just as today's astronauts are about to do. The materials are usable with different holidays.

A few books are divided into episodes, but, as in *Little Bear* (Else Holmelund Minarik) and its sequels, they maintain unity and continuity. In *The Big Jump* (Benjamin Elkin) Ben acquires a dog from the king through a trick learned from the dog himself, and names him Jump. In the remaining stories, Ben, Jump, and the King have further adventures. Most of the books are single and continuous narratives. This is important, perhaps, in the child's notion of a "whole book."

It is understandable that verse is used in a relatively small number of the beginning books. While verse form tolerates much repetition and lends itself to memorization, it also distorts word order and often produces sentences that are not direct or logical. The unfamiliar language patterns determined by the rhyme scheme detract from the read-for-myself qualities of *The Cat in the Hat.* It takes the fantastic achievements of the cat (related as they are to quite real and recognizable elements of child life—nothing to do—mother away—things all messed up—now get them in order before she comes home), plus the fact that the pictures tell the complete story, to overcome the language problems. "He should not be about," is not child language, and "A big red box," is not a sentence, despite capital and period. *A Fly Went By* (Mike McClintock), equally fantastic, uses verse form but manages to keep most of the sentences simple and clear in meaning to the small child.

Beginning books, so classified, include some books that only the ablest third grade children with much reading experience can read with satisfaction. It may be easier to write books for the third grade level than for younger children. As eight-year-olds are expanding in experience and interests and have larger meaning vocabularies, as well as reading vocabularies, the writer is less limited. Moreover, a book suitable for the third grade reader often is also appropriate in language, style, and subject matter for older children whose reading skills are limited and who can find something new and interesting in the content.

Nails to Nickels (Elizabeth A. Campbell) explains money and how our system of coinage developed. While print, spacing, and language are suitable to younger children, there is nothing about the book to label it primary; the Indians, the coin faces of Washington, Lincoln, and others appeal to readers of any age. It may be used, as the author used it, with a coin club; it would go well with a unit of work; older readers will find in it new material simply expressed.

Patrick Visits the Farm (Maureen Daly) is a true and vivid picture of farm life in narrative style. Patrick roams the farm with George, the farm-helper, prototype of all the Uncle Georges in early books of information for children. But George is a natural; he says, "I heard tell —," and "You don't have to be scared —." Patrick gains much information, but that becomes subordinate to the story as the boy goes seeking for the white pheasant, a quest of the spirit and imagination. While suitable for free reading, the book with its considerable content is also useful with units of work, and intermediate children could gain much from it. A leisurely story of a little boy's summer adventures on his grandmother's farm is *Adventuring with David* (Joyce Boyle).

In *Goings On at Little Wishful* (Warren Miller) the adult nature of the theme, the small community attempting to outdo the big community, perhaps doesn't bother the children who are concerned only with the fact that while the playground lacks equipment the city fathers buy a fire engine too long for the city's short and narrow streets. All ends well when the new fire engine is placed in the playground for the children's use, and the old fire engine continues to run to the fires.

Period costumes, cartoon-type drawings, black, magenta and orange as colors, add up to bizarre illustration, but the sheer absurdity of the situations and the violent action suggested in the pictures may lead third graders through the story. Intermediate children may like it.

While the quality of the story may tend to overcome its difficulties, distinction in subject matter may not make a beginning book. *Angelina and the Birds* (Hans Bauman) is included only because some third grade children will read it. The story deals realistically with bird-trapping, an old world custom unknown to American children. But the clash of ideas between the brother who traps and the sister who grieves for the creatures is common enough. Angelina seeks the aid of her grandparents to win Nino away from the trapping, and then the aid of the little wooden St. Francis in his shrine on the mountain path. How she "saves" her brother and helps abolish the primitive custom makes a charming story. The word pictures are supplemented by entrancing illustrations of the Italian setting.

Our American Language, A Book to Begin On (Leslie Waller) in picture and in story tells where the words in the American language came from. While the appeal is primarily to older children, it could be read by able third graders, and the content would appeal to them. The pictures in caricature style would appeal to the older more than to the younger readers.

Acceptability Factors

Some things other than technical difficulty may influence the acceptance of a book by the children for whom it was written, such as the age of the characters, the type of humor, and the literary style.

Many of the books written for beginning readers have six-year-old characters but are too difficult for the six-year-olds to read. The children a little older, who can read them, may reject characters younger than themselves. *Davy and His Dog* (Lois Lenski), the story of a boy and his dog, in primer style text, with pictures by the author, is more suitably placed in first grade than above, but only the ablest first graders will read it. It is important to have characters old enough to appeal to the reader yet within a story simple enough for him to read. *Riding the Pony Express* (Clyde Robert Bulla), which deals dramatically with the Old West and uses children of indeterminate age, perhaps ten or twelve, appeals to the seven-year-old, to the eight-year-old, and also to the reader in the intermediate grades.

The type of humor sometimes raises the difficulty level of material, not only through the effect upon vocabulary, word order, and the like, but also through being unrelated to the maturity level of the reader.

Andrew the Lion Farmer (Donald Hall) is a fantasy clearly at the preschool level but requires third grade ability to read it. Again, while *The Good Knight Ghost* (Jeanne Bendick), a humorous fantasy based on tales of knights in armor rescuing ladies in distress, and *The Three-in-One Prince* (Elizabeth Johnson), a parody on ancient fairy tales, are both designed in format, as well as in difficulty, for eight-year-olds, the kind of spoofing the books are based on would be more likely to appeal to readers past the stage of such tales.

Fantasies with the modern touch may or may not seem funny to young children. *Cindy Lou* (Sonia Fox) tells of the cow that gives chocolate milk and is so annoyed by reporters, photographers, and other curious visitors that her out-put stops. Children old enough to read it may question the fantasy. *The Snow Party* (Beatrice Schenk de Regniers) has "42 grownups, 7 children, 2 babies, 3 dogs, a canary, and a little pet skunk" seek refuge from the storm while a radio commercial blasts away in a tiny snowbound farmhouse in Dakota. Help comes to the benighted in the form of a truck from the K-M bakery, whose commercial they have been hearing, with rolls, cakes, pies, and doughnuts to provide a party. The dialect of the story seems related to the cartoon-like drawings, but while dialect has its place in creating the flavor of place and people, it tends to remove a story from the easy-to-read category.

Humorous books planned for young children sometimes suit older ones better. To develop a tongue-twister to book length is something of a feat. To picture it then with weeping-willow yaks and incomprehensible dragons is to appeal to more mature humor than that of primary children. Of *Jack Mack* (Robert P. Smith) a mother reported, "My six-year-old listened with mild interest; the eight-year-old read it, with help, and thought it fairly funny; the ten-year-old, who had long passed the primary book stage, read it and howled with delight."

Satire is wasted in children's books. It can be appreciated only by the reader thoroughly familiar with the original material. Therefore, books that parody fairy tales, knights in armor, covered wagon journeys, myths and legends, whether well done or poorly, are lost on readers who have not enough experience with the original literature to recognize the nature of the "spoof." They either take it in all seriousness, or they are bored by it.

To appreciate the broad humor in *How Space Rockets Began* (LeGrand), the reader would have to be familiar with the themes satirized, tall tales, space fiction, and many others, and to understand the formula type of cartoon in which one thing trips off another.

Indirectness, wordiness, coyness, vagueness, and talking around the subject make a piece of writing uninteresting to small children. Useless repetition, talking down to the reader, over-emphasizing the point —all have the same effect.

Ideas and concepts may take a book out of beginning reader range. What a precocious child from a highly literate home would enjoy might be lost upon the child of average ability, who has no special literary experience, no particular familiarity with literary characters and settings.

Prose presenting children as adults see them is as wasteful as poetry written *about* children rather than *to* children. The writer for children must divest himself of nostalgic notions and see things from their point of vantage. Writers who attempt to be literary often succeed only in making their stories unreadable. "A halo of golden hair" would be the mere prattling of a sentimental adult. But in *Barn Cat*, Fuzz is so named because of her shining hair, and the word is perfect from the child reader's point of view.

THREE What They Are About

The subject matter of the books for beginning readers is highly varied and points to the range of the interests of young children.

Realism and Fantasy in Fiction

Realism and fantasy play almost equal parts. The realistic stories deal with the child's real world and the people who inhabit it—father, mother, brothers and sisters, playmates, the mailman, the milkman, sometimes the policeman, the fireman; often, too, the characters include the dog, the cat, the pony, the chickens, the turtle, or the parakeet.

Many of the realistic stories have to do with mild adventures, often humorous. In *Wanted, a Brother* (Gina Bell), Timothy explores the Brothers Sales Company, who prove to be sellers of washing machines, and the Trading Post, which has no brothers to trade. Finally, he borrows a brother, and that works well until bedtime, when Billy, the borrowed brother, decides to go home. Anne, Timothy's sister, helps to solve his problem, so that he no longer lacks a playmate.

Simple stories of children's everyday experiences can be sparked with humor and suspense and illuminated with pictures. *In John's Backyard* (Esther Meeks) will inspire young readers to go hunting in their own backyards where they may find, as John did, a bird's nest, blossoming plants, rabbits, and insects of many kinds. *Too Many Mittens* (Florence and Louis Slobodkin) is simply told and has all the charm of the Slobodkin illustrations. Nearly everyone who heard that the twins had lost a mitten had a single one on hand and sent it to them so that soon the twins had practically all the red mittens in town. How they located the owners makes a pleasing story.

In *Mr. Pine's Mixed-Up Signs* (Leonard Kessler), a hilarious story resulting from the fact that Mr. Pine loses his glasses just when he has to put up the signs, the child reader can identify fully with the adult hero.

Many realistic stories have interesting settings. *Barn Cat* (Bell Coates) is laid on a farm on the South Dakota plains. The stray cat stays in the barn and likes to sleep on the back of a cow. On a night of a blizzard, when she awakens the family, they find that the barn door has blown open and the new-born calf is in danger of freezing. Of course, for this, she wins acceptance in the family, to the reader's satisfaction as well as that of Bud and his sister, Fuzz, who had befriended her. The story has the kind of "pull" that keeps the young reader reading.

City stories, once hard to find, are represented in *Night Cat* (Irma S. Black), whose adventures of the night explain why he is so lazy in the daytime when Tommie and Jane would like to play with him. The pictures, in appropriate smudgy black, touched with a yellow moon and yellow cat eyes, interpret the text so definitely that it can be read at second grade level.

How Many Bears? (Laura Zirbes) tells that Jack's longing to see real live bears caused the family to take a park vacation. Realistic illustrations, carefully selected vocabulary, and much repetition make this book readable, in the group situation, at an early level. The many cues for discussion show that the author intended it for group reading.

Small Clown (Nancy Faulkner), an imaginative story but not without the realm of possibility, is developed within a realistic circus background. When the small clown has a chance to appear in the circus in which his father is a clown, he tramps around the big ring, awkwardly and confusedly with his shoes on the wrong feet. What is to him a painful mistake is thought by the audience to be clever pantomime and wins him the right to be part of the circus.

That informative books may be made appealing by humor, incident, and characterization is demonstrated in the *Three Boys and a Lighthouse* (Nan Hayden Agle and Ellen Wilson). Abercrombie, Benjamin, and Christopher learn all about lighthouses during their summer vacation. The fact that they are triplets not only supplies many amusing situations but also provides much repetition which makes for ease of reading.

Adult readers may question the chapter in which the three boys live, each on his own island, just within reach of the lighthouse keeper's spy glass for two days and nights; but most seven- and eight-year-olds will believe in the boys' ability to take care of themselves in such a situation. In the sequels, *Three Boys and a Mine* (Agle and Wilson) and *Three Boys and a Helicopter* (Agle and Wilson), readers learn facts along with the stories. The series assumes some progression in interests and maturity as well as in reading ability. Some eight-year-olds have proceeded blithely through *Three Boys and a Helicopter,* which, because of its technical vocabulary, would usually be placed at fifth or sixth grade level.

Realism includes strong suspense in the story of *The Little Horse That Raced the Train* (Wilma P. Hays), which is as fast-paced, as direct, as was the little horse himself when he beat Elmer's train to the table rock beyond the tunnel. Elmer, alone in the passenger car, on the round-trip-a-day train, watched the little horse each day, and when he finally convinced the two trainmen that he wasn't seeing things, they told him the horse had doubtless been left behind from the ranchers' round-up.

When, after a heavy snow-storm, Elmer realized that the little horse was stranded on the table rock, he managed to create such concern in the town where the train took him to school that food was carried by helicopter to his friend. This exciting story, based on facts, can be read by third grade children but will appeal also to those older.

As a reaction to their seven-year-old daughter's reading to them from *her* books, "See Mary Come. See John Come. John and Mary are coming," Bill and Rosalie Brown wrote *The Forest Firemen.* It has the excitement and suspense natural to the topic, and an additional plot element; the oldest fireman was a little slow, and the other firemen were impatient with him. But it was he who discovered a last hidden spark and saved the forest after all.

Adventure and excitement characterize *Pirate's Promise* (Clyde R. Bulla), the story of a boy who joined forces briefly with a pirate crew to escape being bound out for seven years in America against his will. Through perilous adventures he finds refuge in a city in South Carolina and is able to send for his younger sister still in England.

Riding the Pony Express (Bulla) has a great deal of information about the pony express, and yet the story is highly dramatic. Dick Park, who didn't like the life in the small frontier settlements, won through valiant effort the right to be a pony express rider like his father. In *The Sword in the Tree* (Bulla), Shan, deprived of his inheritance, fled from his castle, made his way to King Arthur's court, and sought help for himself and his mother. Sir Gareth was assigned to right the wrong and, in a battle with sword and mail, defeated the usurper and drove him from the castle, so that Shan came into his own again. While suited to intermediate grades and ideal for slower readers of sixth and seventh grades, these three stories can be read by able third grade children.

Realism and fantasy are not always sharply divided. Writers recognize that the imagination of childhood is part of real life. *Fierce John* (Edward Fenton) literally becomes a lion in his attempts to roar like a lion at the zoo. *A Picture for Harold's Room* (Crockett Johnson) transcends reality with the first stroke of Harold's crayon, and thereafter each line Harold draws leads with the pure logic of fantasy to the next one. The author-artist suggests that the book introduces perspective. However, it is the gay nonsense that will appeal as such to second graders who can read it and to younger children who can follow the story from the pictures. A prodigality of fanciful episodes marks both *Tip and Dip* (Susanne Gleaves) and *The Wishing Pool* (Munro Leaf), tending to strain the imagination of the young reader for whom the language of the text has been carefully devised. Enchanting pictures mark *Tip and Dip*, and *The Wishing Pool* is adorned in the unique style of its author-artist.

Relation to School Activities, Seasons, and Special Days

A very few of the beginning books appear to serve chiefly the group situation in which the reading is definitely guided by the teacher, but many, while appropriate for individual use, have developed out of the experiences and activities common in the primary classrooms, especially in science and social studies.

How a Seed Grows (Helene J. Jordan) and *Seeds and More Seeds* (Millicent Selsam) both relate directly to classroom projects. Therefore, not only is the interest value high but the vocabulary is also familiar in meaning and because of frequent reference easily fixed. *How a Seed Grows* can be used in first grade (see page 12), and *Seeds and More Seeds*, with its repetitive style, is suited to group work, with the stimulus of discussion. Selsam's *Plenty of Fish* is more nearly narrative but related closely to the classroom interest in fishbowl and aquarium.

The Big Snow (Berta and Elmer Hader) with its seasonal interest presents important information, and the preparations of animals and birds for winter is a topic around which science studies may be centered at any primary level. While it is, in general, too hard for any but the best readers in upper primary, it has in its center four pages of tiny detailed pictures and very simple text. These, the first graders probably, and the second graders certainly, can read with a little help. In any case the fine prose should be read aloud for all the children to enjoy.

My Time of Year (Katherine Dow) portrays the seasons in succession in appealing pictures and gentle text ending in the happy comment, "And the season it is, is the one that I like."

Social studies, in its simple form in the primary curriculum, often deals with happenings close to the children. In *Big New School* (Evelyn Hastings), community growth and changes in the way of life over time are reflected in the replacement of the one-room school with a large, new building. Many children, fortunately, are living with the building of new schools and additions and will find this story related to their experience.

Mr. Turtle's Mystery (Betty Miles) is an intriguing read-for-myself for advanced second grade and third grade children and will be a read-to in kindergarten and first grade, where classroom turtles abound. In the latter case, the teacher will use the story in relation to their experience, rather than merely read it to them.

All Ready for School (Leone Adelson) is desirable for the first grade reading table but not for independent reading. It will not suit the third grade child who can read it, but the six-year-old and the preschooler will listen to it again and again and will return to the pictures to relive the story. An earlier book, *A Day at School* (Agnes B. McCready), also deals with class activities, and first grade pupils can read certain pages of it.

From This to That (Keith W. Jennison) has pictures so skillfully cued to the text that some pages can be read by first graders, and the content is related to book binding, an activity often developed very simply in the first and second grades.

Peter's Policeman (Anne Lattin) ties in with the school safety program and with the work of the police. The situation is not uncommon. The traffic policeman, because of his other duties, is replaced by the crossing guard, and the children must adapt to new guidance.

Special days are observed in a number of books. In *What Is for My Birthday?* (Isabel and Frederick Eberstadt), all the people important to Nell come to visit on her sixth birthday, but the story is more suited to preschool use. *Stop It, Moppit!* (Geraldine Ross) is one more story of colored eggs and the Easter bunny. It is told largely by the pictures which beginners will enjoy. The fact that both these books are in verse tends to limit readability.

Christopher Columbus (Clara Ingram Judson) recreates the places and the times of the great discoverer's boyhood and takes him through his struggles and disappointments to the discovery of the new world. This is accomplished in the simplest, most direct narrative and within a total list of 368 words. It can be read by able second grade readers and will fit into the early part of the third grade year, particularly near the twelfth of October.

Not all special day interests are serious ones. A book for Hallowe'en is *Which Witch?* (Robert Lasson). Brief as to text and beguiling as to pictures, this is, nevertheless, beyond the youngest readers. With help, beginning second graders can read many of the pages, but with its elaborate play on "which-witch" sounds, it remains a book better for listening.

The Craziest Hallowe'en (Ursula von Hippel), despite its humor, imagination, and appropriate illustrations, is not readable by children of the age appealed to, but it makes a delightful read-to book. *Scat, the Witch's Cat* (Geraldine Ross) is another book that all primary children will enjoy for the gay colorful pictures of Hallowe'en activities but that only quite able readers will read.

Nor, on the other hand, do serious days always get serious treatment. Zoo day can be hilariously celebrated with *Julius* (Syd Hoff). In the story Davy goes to Africa with his father, and on their journey he asks his father,

> Do you want a lion?
> Do you want an elephant?
> Do you want a giraffe? (No, he wanted a gorilla.)

The utter absurdity of the situation in which Julius, the gorilla, becomes Davy's pet and then joins the circus doesn't baffle the second grade pupil. He is familiar with the jungle characters, from books, and possibly the circus characters from life, and he recognizes the antics of the gorilla as make-believe.

Sources and Themes

The lack of similarity in theme among these books is indeed remarkable. When a theme, a situation, or a pattern of development recurs, it is in practically every case stamped with the writer's original approach.

Two books that have the same situation, a child's visit to a farm, could hardly be more unlike than *I Know a Farm* (Ethel Collier) with its quiet, wistful tone and its little girl all in tune with the cattails in the pond and the kittens in the haymow, and *Patrick Visits the Farm* (Maureen Daly) in which Patrick "wants to learn everything."

The great number of authors who have created books for this level doubtless accounts in part for the originality and diversity of material. The characters, situations, and settings in the individual books are countless. Familiar locale—home, school, community—offers perhaps a majority of the settings, but *You Will Go to the Moon* (Mae and Ira Freeman) takes the young reader right out of the earth's atmosphere. It is developed in terms of the now actually anticipated plans for conquering space. *David and the Giant* (Mike McClintock) takes him into the far past, *Christopher Columbus* (Clara Ingram Judson) into the nearer past, but beyond his capacity to imagine time. The fantasies, of course, such as *Green Eggs and Ham* (Dr. Seuss) take him "out of this world" in another sense.

Many of these books deal with themes of which the child has emotional awareness. *The Boy Who Couldn't Roar* (Grace Berquist) tells of a small boy, dominated by an older brother, who learns to stand up for his rights in their joint ownership and care for a horse.

The theme of the child's attempt to gain recognition, desire to grow up, or to have the experiences of older children and adults appears often as in *A Letter for Cathy* (Kathryn Hitte), which expresses a child's resentment at being "smaller" or "younger" and excluded from the activities of her elders. Other themes appear: what he wants to be as in *I Want to Be a Cowboy* (Joan Walsh Anglund) and *Small Clown* (Nancy Faulkner); seeking a playmate in *Wanted, a Brother* (Gina Bell); desiring something greatly. Emmett in *Emmett's Pig* (Mary Stolz) has an inordinate longing to see and to own a pig and expresses a deep satisfaction when he gains his wish.

Gentle spoofing of the idiosyncrasies which small children recognize in themselves goes on in certain stories. *The Boy Who Would Not Say His Name* (Elizabeth Vreeken) is the usual small boy who refuses to talk when the grown-ups want him to. *Stevie Finds a Way* (Ruth Liebers and Lillian Rothenberg) is every small boy with inveterate curiosity.

Little Lone Coyote (Wilma Pitchford Hays) develops the theme of the wildling that the boy has reared and loves but must let go. The pet coyote causes unusual troubles through his mischief, and older children, as well as third graders, will be interested in his fate. *A Puppy for Keeps* (Quail Hawkins) creates an appealing David, who finally gains his wish for a pet. Kurt Wiese's realistic black and white drawings establish the locale, a country place without conveniences; David in a tin bath wipes soap out of his eyes.

Learning not to be afraid is spelled out in *Jeff and the Fourteen Eyes* (Cathrine Barr) when Jeff discovers his night visitors with the aid of his flashlight. While the sequence of animal visitors may not be strictly scientific, their curiosity seems quite real.

"A hero in spite of himself" is the theme of *Benny and the Bear* (Oliver Carleton), the story of a small boy who didn't know what bears looked like. *Just Follow Me* (Phoebe Erickson) reminds the reader that home is best.

Many of these books deal with the world that young children find about them. *The Hill That Grew* (Esther Meeks) tells a true story of children in a flat Michigan town, who had plenty of snow but no place to slide, and how intently they watched as the grown-ups built them a hill. In *Stevie Finds a Way* (Liebers and Rothenberg) Stevie tries to go inside the fence to watch the digging for the new apartment building; he tries to climb over; he tries to crawl under. Finally, the foreman who has chased him from each position allows him to drill peep-holes in the boards—with most satisfying results to Stevie. These real situations six- and seven-year-olds accept as their own problems, and they readily identify with the characters.

The stories have come from every kind of source. Straight out of the daily news came *Gertie the Duck* (Louis G. Romano and Nicholas P. Georgiady) and "Gertie Makes a Nest" in *Friendly Birds* (Edward W. and Marguerite P. Dolch). Both are based on the fact that a wild duck nested on a pile below the bridge on the Milwaukee River, right in the populous part of the city. Georgiady's story has more of the nature of people than of ducks in it, but it has suspense and incident. Dolch's story is in straight factual form.

The Fire Cat (Esther Averill) possibly originated in a story common enough in the daily papers, of a cat that knows how to climb up a tree, but not down, and has to be rescued by firemen.

The *Cat in the Hat* surely had its inception in some early primer that read,

> The rat sat on the mat.
> The cat saw the rat.
> The cat ran after the rat.

In *The Cat in the Hat Comes Back* the obstreperous cat introduces a whole alphabet of cats—A, B, C, through S, Y, Z to clean up the mess he had made, just as in *One Fish, Two Fish, Red Fish, Blue Fish*

(Dr. Seuss)—the fantastic Zans does not merely rhyme with *cans;* he is part of a phonic family.

The Seal That Couldn't Swim (Alexis Ladas) is the actual experience of the author, first told in a magazine article, with a baby seal that had to be taught not only to swim, but even to eat. *The Cantankerous Crow* (Lennart Hellsing and Poul Stroyer), adapted by Nancy and Edward Maze, and *It's a Deal* (Poul Stroyer), adapted by Maria Cimino from an old folk tale theme, are both translations from the Swedish. *Christopher Columbus* (Clara Ingram Judson) is an adaptation of the author's biography for older children. *David and the Giant* (Mike McClintock) is, of course, a retelling of the Bible story. But most of the books are original, whether fantasy or realism, and have to do with the here and now.

Innovations sometimes spark creative minds. *How to Read a Rabbit* (Jean Fritz) grew out of Stephen's discovery that there was a lending source for animals just as for books.

Anthropology furnishes material for *The Boy Who Lived in a Cave* (Estelle Friedman) in which danger in the open, among giant animals, is contrasted to the security of the safe, warm cave and the love and care of parents. Also from the beginnings of mankind comes *The Hole in the Hill* (Marion Seyton) which depicts, imaginatively rather than scientifically, a stone age family seeking a pet with superior qualities, and so discovering the dog.

Too Many Dogs (Ramona D. Dupré), on the other hand, deals with dogs in a strictly modern situation. The Whites have to find a solution when Molly, the hunting dog, and her nine pups are about to eat them out of house and home. While *The Hole in the Hill* deals with concepts of human beginnings that second grade pupils *may* be acquiring in social studies, the simple, straightforward language and the relative familiarity of the situation in *Too Many Dogs* makes it suitable for children who have made some start in reading.

Ancient Tales

Older literature continues to provide new books. The tales that the younger children enjoy when told to them have to be simplified for reading by the sevens, eights, and nines. *Belling the Cat* (Leland Jacobs) includes also "Little Red Hen" and "Rabbit's Mistake." Versions of old stories appear in new dress in the well-known *Five Chinese Brothers* (Claire Huchet Bishop) and in *Three Billy Goats Gruff* (Marcia Brown). To the qualities of expert writing and fine illustrations these stories add the element of familiarity and thus insure their readability.

The folk tale pattern continues to intrigue writers. One truly original, even though it faintly resembles "The Musicians of Bremen," is *Something New at the Circus* (Hannah Simons). Ox, pig, sheep, goose, duck, and even little chick make a long trek to see the circus, and by good fortune, not only see it but also take part in it. These "talking beasts" are as intriguing as the little red hen or the three little pigs. The cumulative pattern provides repetition and makes for ease of reading, but the sentences are of varying length and the pages of varying difficulty, so that while the tale as a read-to will intrigue the nursery school age and up, it must be left, as a read-for-myself, to the second grade level. The illustrations are climaxed by a spread which runs lengthwise of two pages, an original and unusual twist. In *Silly Billy* (Tamara Kitt), the hero proves himself by finding others sillier than himself.

The Shoes Fit for a King (Helen E. Bill) is a fairy tale deserving inclusion in the classics. Based on a fresh, original concept, it is told in simple language and is full of suspense and incident. The proud shoes get their comeuppance, but eventually they find their place and are happy ever after. This tale, faultlessly told, also is perfectly pictured.

Folk Tales

Folklore requires skillful adaptation to the needs of younger readers. Far off countries are represented in *Stories from Japan* (Edward and Marguerite Dolch) and *Stories from Hawaii* (Dolch). Each is developed within the Dolch storyteller's vocabulary of 684 words.

The Sky-God Stories (Verna Aardema), African folk tales based on the *Akan-Ashanti Folk Tales* by R. S. Rattry, published by Clarendon Press in 1930, are here adapted for easy reading and pictured in fairy-tale mood. The stories are timely, humorous, and elemental enough to have a strong pull for seven-year-olds.

The Na of Wa (Aardema), a Ghana tale, is adapted from the same source and is an African version of the story of the boy who makes bad bargains and then is rewarded for his laziness and stupidity. A complex story line makes this one more difficult.

Otwe (Aardema), based upon *Nuer Customs and Folklore* by Ray Huffman, Oxford University Press, 1931, is the story of a man who could understand the language of birds and animals. It has a single uncomplicated theme and, therefore, is easier to read.

Native tradition is represented in *Old Satan* (Lucille Wallower), a bit of Pennsylvania folklore fashioned by the author-illustrator around an oft-repeated motif:

> Old Satan was a mule
> the biggest, blackest,
> most *ornery* mule
> you ever did see!

Children listening to the story will begin to repeat the motif. A number of unfamiliar words, such as "pot-bellied stove" and "lather" move the story up a little in reading difficulty. The book's beautiful design includes the choice print and the grouping of the text matter on the pages, as well as the pictures in black and red against brilliant white paper. The "old-timey" settings, costumes, and activities may require interpretation, but children will listen to the story or read it to themselves over and over. Like so many modern American folk tales, it depends for its interest on its utter absurdity.

Animals, Made-Up and Truly Ones

The love of children for animals is always good for a story. *Little Maverick Cow* (Belle Coates) is more than an animal story. The Montana ranch family has lost its only milk cow and cannot afford to buy another. Sue and Todd are just seven and eight but show themselves responsible not only in trying to solve the problem but also in facing up to the moral issue when a heifer breaks the fence and shows she likes their farm. Happily, their right decision wins for them a most engaging cow.

The animal stories vary in treatment, just as do animal stories in all children's books. Make-believe animals and situations occupy some attention. In *Rob and the Robins* (Katherine Lappa), the birds are trying to drive the boy out of their tree. However, when he eats a magic berry, Rob understands their language; then he and the robins learn to live together in friendly accord. Little Gray Mouse in *The Four Friends* (Carol Hoff) is helped by each friend in turn to escape the cat. Somewhat in the folktale style, the story has much repetition and a measure of suspense.

Hurry Up, Slowpoke (Crosby Newell) tells of the trials of a very human mouse family with their dilatory member. In *Bear Trouble* (Lilian Moore) a squirrel and a chipmunk vanquish the ubiquitous bear. Pictures expressing the elephant's enormity enliven the story of *The Elephant and the Flea* (Alain).

Rackety Rabbit, in *The Mystery of the Gate Sign* (Margaret Friskey), thinks and speaks, but only to himself and other rabbits. He can read "Beans" and "Lettuce" on the seed envelopes in the garden rows, but he needs more time and help of his brothers to interpret a sign meant only for people. This sign, "No Dogs!" turns out to be of importance to rabbits after all, and with his brothers Hush and Shush, Rackety takes up headquarters in the zoo.

Creatures of fantasy, called animals, appear in many of these books, and among the dog stories there are some real extravaganzas. *Gabriel Wrinkles* (Charles Doughtie) is hardly appropriate to the skills of the youngest readers, but the pictures of the extraordinary bloodhound *who couldn't smell a thing* will intrigue even the child *who cannot read a word.*

In *Danny and the Dinosaur* (Syd Hoff), the mixture of reality and fantasy is developed in such simple vocabulary, direct sentences, and few words to a page that beginning second and some of the abler first graders can read it. Children a little older also will enjoy the amiable dinosaur who took Danny traveling and was careful not to step on the houses! *Sammy the Seal* (Hoff) is still easier, and *Julius* (Hoff) is in the same tone. All are straightfaced tales of animals' adventures in the fantastic world of people. These stories are their own excuse. Able third grade readers will read them on their own, and older children will enjoy them.

Even more fantastic are *Sebastian and the Dragon* (Maxine W. Kumin), in which rollicking verse tells a rollicking story, and *Round Round World* (Michael Douglas), in which Barnaby the cat travels at large because his owner is allergic to cats.

A few stories lie halfway between fantasy and realism. In *Miss Hattie and the Monkey* (Helen D. Olds), Jingles wins his way by his friendliness and an unexpected act of service. Danny conquers his mother's defenses in *Too Many Bozos* (Lilian Moore) when he brings in the frog Bozo that jumps in the sink, the white mouse Bozo that crawls on the iced cake, and an ant farm, also named Bozo. Mother agrees that he just has to have a very small dog, and Danny names him Bozo.

Real animals appear in greater numbers in the beginning books than imaginative ones. *Up a Tree* (Winifred and Cecil Lubbell) is an everyday story of a cat that can climb up but is afraid to come down. Those not yet ready to read on their own will ponder the drawings, in great detail, of the Siamese Kira.

The Elegant Eleanor (Jean P. Colby) is a true animal story in which cat and dog learn to be friends and boy and girl learn to appreciate each other. While simply written, it requires third grade reading ability or better; older children will also enjoy it. *Jenny* (Colby) is a true dog story that second graders can read and older children also will enjoy. In *Jamie, A Bassett Hound* (Margaret S. Johnson), the story focuses on the dog himself, all head, ears, and feet. His finding a friend in the barnyard goose is more interesting than the pat situation in which he saves the boy's life and is then accepted by the family.

Horse stories are of great interest to older children, but *Billy and Blaze* (C. W. Anderson) is a brief and simple story of a boy, his horse, and his dog that has delighted the younger readers for twenty-five years. In *Blaze Finds the Trail* (Anderson), the author-artist's superb horse drawings have become almost photographic.

An entertaining factual story, *Molly and the Toolshed* (Sally Scott), is about a lamb that liked people better than sheep. When she grew up and had lambs of her own and still preferred the toolshed, Mr. Brown had to enlarge it.

The Curious Cow (Esther Meeks) comes straight out of real life. Brief, with few words to a page and with gay, cartoon-like illustrations, this book even looks easy, and curious Katy makes a direct appeal to curious boys and girls.

Books that deal with the dog as part of the story of the child include *A Part-Time Dog for Nick* (Carol Denison), a new version of the popular theme, a child's longing for a pet. The jacket notes that "the vocabulary is based upon word lists tailored to his reading level —sentences which gradually increase in complexity." The book loses nothing of interest by its adaptation to the young reader's skill, and second grade pupils will read it.

A few books have to do with animals in real but dramatic situations; among them are *The Little Horse That Raced the Train* and *Too Many Dogs* (Wilma P. Hays). *Playing Possum* (Edward Eager) relies for its humor on the possum's eye view of the matter—from the bottom of a barrel. The big folks try to exterminate him as a sick animal, but the small boy, knowing he is only playing possum, manages to set him free.

Zoo animals and their babies are always intriguing subjects, but the idea of a zoo where baby animals could be played with *was* new in Alice's experience in *Something New at the Zoo* (Esther Meeks). *Mr. Billy's Gun* (Berta and Elmer Hader) shows a family of quail in every kind of attitude and in every stage of development, and *A*

Fox in the House (Charles Phillip Fox) is a simple narrative sequence with a great many close-up photographs of the fox from babyhood to maturity.

Books of Information

Informational books are increasing in number among beginning books, but there are variations in difficulty. *Time: A Book to Begin On* (Leslie Waller) probably is for one beginning to read about time. It is suitable in concepts, vocabulary, and sentence structure for only very able third grade readers.

However, *Weather* (Waller), its companion volume, is easier reading. The concepts are more familiar. The language is simpler and the style more appealing; the pictures directly supplement the text. These books also are usable above the primary grades, for intermediate, or even for upper grade reading. Their expository style is suited to the content.

Informational books are best used, possibly, with organized work in social studies and in science. One of the teacher's never-ending problems is to find material of different difficulty levels, so that the slow-to-read as well as the able may do individual investigations and make class contributions.

I Want to Be a Cowboy (Carla Greene) and *I Want to Be an Airline Hostess* (Greene) are written in narrative style. Don's visit to his uncle's ranch acquaints him with real cowboys. He goes with them on a round-up, watches the "cutting out" of the calves from the herd and the branding, sleeps on a bed roll, and eats with the ranch hands beside their camp fires. The information is authentic; the illustrations, while touched with humor, are precise. In *I Want to Be an Airline Hostess,* Sue on her first flight learns about flying while pleasantly engaged in it and about the duties of the hostess by helping her. These are two books very simply written, and the narrative form appeals to readers as young as six. Whether the 30-point, bulletin type adds to the readability is doubtful. Spacing must be very wide for large type to be effective. The standard 24-point type in *A Dog for Susie* (Ruth Nordlie), with spacing governed by the paragraphing, seems visually more desirable.

Mabel the Whale (Patricia King) deals with a factual situation. A whale, unhappy in her first tank in Marineland, is moved to a larger tank by means of a crane and mattresses and is helped to adjust to her new quarters. Content of such genuine interest needs no special devices of writing.

Biography designed for the primary level often is more useful for the older, slower readers. But *A Man Named Columbus* (Gertrude Norman) and the others of this series (see Norman) do appeal directly to primary children. In modern biographies for children, the author deals with the whole life of the subject. Tragic endings, as in the stories of Columbus and Lincoln, are so presented that young children can accept them.

In *Henry Hudson* (Carl Carmer), the life of the great explorer and his battles with storms and icy seas in his four western voyages are seen through the eyes of his young son, John, who accompanied him. The fact of their abandonment by a mutinous crew is softened with the thought that father and son, with six loyal sailors, may have established a settlement and lived for some years on the shores of Hudson Bay. There is careful selection in this story; high adventure is continually accompanied by frustration and ends in tragedy; yet a tone is preserved that makes it suitable reading for primary children.

Alphabetical order permits brief descriptions in *Boats and Ships from A to Z* (Anne Alexander) of items as modern as *aircraft carrier* and as ancient as *galleon;* large type, good spacing, and informational pictures place this at upper primary, but it is also interesting material for intermediate grades and useful for older, slower readers.

Science

Subjects in the science area are almost unlimited; but in some of the books reviewed, it appears that authors, coping with the problems of limited vocabulary, short sentences, and desirable repetition, are unable to convey much information. On the other hand, there is *Cottontail Rabbit* (Elizabeth and Charles Schwartz), based on extensive research, a "live" study of 250 specimens in their native haunts, which resulted first in a sound-color motion picture of rabbits in the field. Despite this thoroughgoing background, the writing is straightforward and clearly understandable by young children. The narrative style, following the day-by-day, hour-by-hour life of a female cottontail, makes it a story to child readers. The writers have not minced matters in regard to either the fertility or the mortality of rabbits.

Similarly, *Stripe* (Robert M. McClung) tells with stern realism that the little chipmunk, foraging with his siblings, loses one to a blacksnake and another to the farmer's cat. But Stripe had just eaten, also without compunction, the brown moth clinging to the bark of the tree. Pictures and detail of text show the chipmunk's feeding habits and his tunneling of passages, as well as his bouts with enemies.

These books that present complete animal life cycles tell of the mating and the length of time to the birth of the babies. In the case of *Cottontail,* the narrative includes the hardships the female rabbit endures in producing, feeding, and safeguarding as many as three litters in one short summer. That most of her offspring are destroyed by predatory animals is presented without sentiment. It is made clear that multiplying so rapidly, rabbits, if not preyed upon, would overrun everything.

Reading difficulty in the science books is related to the kinds of concepts developed. *Big Tracks, Little Tracks* (Franklyn M. Branley) deals with concrete and tangible realities, with things to which children can apply sight, touch, and other senses.

A Tree Is a Plant (Clyde R. Bulla), vividly pictured and simply written, tells the life history of the apple tree with special emphasis on its changes by season.

In considering science books for young children, one aches to say, "Be sure the children have some *real* experience with the apple tree, the tadpoles, the storm, the running brook; only so will they truly value the book about it, and only so will the book enrich their contact with the world around them."

The Moon Seems to Change (Franklyn M. Branley), while very simply written, presents some ideas a little hard for young children to grasp; this moves it up slightly in reading difficulty, despite the woodcut illustrations which are well adapted to the subject matter. In *The Clean Brook* (Margaret F. Bartlett), the generalizations are harder for the young reader than the concrete pages, even though the latter have more words. The illustrations sometimes present the information clearly and sometimes do not.

The Green Thumb Story (Jean Fiedler), made up of episodes, short stories in fact, is a book satisfying in format, with appropriate paragraph indentation and white space in proportion to the size of the print, which is clear and attractive. Peter takes literally a common expression, and his efforts to find someone with a green thumb lead the story through information on the making of a garden to the surprising conclusion that *he* has a green thumb.

Time Is When (B. Y. Gleick) is also an effort to deal with abstractions. To answer seven-year-olds' questions about time, there are such direct statements as:

> In one second you can bounce a ball,
> or jump
> or say hello
> or turn a page.

Many of the questions will have come before seven, however, and as a read-to this book is best used in relation to time-learning experiences, not just read through from beginning to end. Concepts of time, past, present, a day, a month, a year, are presented, and so are instruments of time—clocks and calendars. Perhaps the book's purpose is to raise questions as well as to answer some. Informative text and pictures together make learning about time an interesting pursuit.

I Like Caterpillars (Gladys Conklin) with its highly decorative drawings in four-color seems a nearly perfect science book for beginners. The caterpillars, vividly sketched and colored, are true to form although the flamboyant flowers are more colorful than realistic. Some varieties of caterpillars are shown in several stages of growth but only as caterpillars, not as butterflies or moths. The stages are indicated by color, and by size within a type. One page is devoted to cocoons.

The words, "I like caterpillars," establish the style. Because of the repetition and the clear picture cues, beginning second graders may read the first few pages and, with individual help, the whole book. Again the most desirable use of this book is in relation to some real experience with caterpillars, and this is possible in most primary grades. Vocabulary would be developing as cocoons and leaves or blossoms for feeding were collected. The book, in addition to its specific teaching of caterpillars and their habits, should do much to establish attitudes of interest instead of repugnance.

What's Inside of Me? (Herbert S. Zim) is a text-style book uniquely planned with pages set in large type to be read by child, small type by parent. Discussion, together with the illustrations in color, would develop much information. The material is right for the youngster interested in his physical make-up, although the book may lack appeal for the casual reader.

Inside You and Me (E. F. and C. L. Fenton) approaches the make-up of the human body by lightly starting with Hallowe'en skeletons. The reader has to pause to decide whether he is reading verse or prose. The pictures do much to achieve the purpose, an understanding of the bony framework, the muscles, and the organs of the body.

Busy Water (Jane Castle) might well be used in relation to a class study of water, offering information both in picture and text. It is also attractive enough in its appropriate colors of blue, green, black and white to entice a child to individual reading. Pictures as well as text are informative.

Combining scientific information and folk tales is the difficult task of *Lightning* (Jeanne Bendick). In the hands of teacher or parent this book serves the purpose of answering the questions or of stimulating the questions of the second or third grade child. However, only the able reader with a real interest in the subject matter would read it himself.

Another book about water, *The Little River* (Ann Rand) presents poetic concepts, seemingly at variance with science, in prose interspersed with rhyme. Some skill in reading aloud is required to give virtue to verse with internal rhyme:

> it asked a pheasant
> About a pleasant place to visit
> ....
> with a shake of his feathers,
> will take you straight
> to a lonely lake.

While this style is distracting to the adult, children may not notice it. The illustrations present a river, not only poetically, but also with vivid accuracy.

From Rocks to Rockets (Solveig Paulson Russell) is a simply written and highly readable account of man's progressive use of stones, drags, and wheels, beginning with an ordinary rock in the Stone Age and ending with automobiles and rockets. The illustrations portray so clearly the principle discussed in the accompanying words that abler third grade children can read the text. Second grade children will gain much information from it if it is read and shown by the teacher, especially in connection with the study of transportation.

Scientific information is presented in *Junior Science Book of Flying* (Rocco V. Feravolo) with examples that children can understand and is so well pictured, especially with diagrams, that primary children will read it, although older children will also enjoy it.

Others of the series are *Stars* (Phoebe Crosby), which presents up-to-date information on the stars and planets in relation to Earth; *Trees* (Robert S. Lemon), which gives basic information about types of trees, how they grow, and the risks of their survival, describing and illustrating the types in appealing style. Useful in the simple study of trees, it would also serve in the study of conservation.

Children of Other Countries

A share of attention is given to foreign children in the books for beginning reading. Some interesting ones deal with the life of today in other countries.

Great Day in Israel: Why Ziva Cried on the Feast of the First Fruits (Moshe Shamir) is a story of a Hebrew festival based on an age-old custom, as celebrated today. While more suited to the reading ability of intermediate children, it will be read by younger children who have group or individual interest in modern Israel.

Both *Suzu the Bride Doll* (Patricia M. Martin) and *Bianca* (Lillian Gorfinkle), the first relating to the Japanese feast of dolls, the second a gay story of a modern little girl's part in the building of a bridge in Italy, are limited to the highest level of primary reading ability but as read-to books they are usable in grades one and two when, for any genuine reason, the children are interested in Japan or in Italy. The younger children will use them for the vivid details presented and the lavish pictures, after hearing the stories read.

Another story of modern Italy, *Tony's Good Luck* (Michael Gillen), is marked by warm family feeling, a small boy's share in a good day's work, and a series of mild adventures. Readers will rejoice in the special list of Italian words. For first and second grade children, the reader will build in the background with some explanation and with reference to a simple world map or globe. The black and white sketches develop both setting and story. Ablest third graders and older children will read and enjoy it for themselves.

Two books of distinctive style are *Lonely Maria* (Elizabeth Coatsworth) and *Pictures for the Palace* (Flora Fifield). The first catches the poetry of place and people on Maria's small island, where she has no playmates; it describes her creating a kitten, a house, and a dog with her stick in the sand. The reader's imagination roams with Maria's as her creations take on a life of their own. The second is a story based on the life and legends of the artist Hokusai, with illustrations suggesting the Japanese brush-painting style. The small boy who triumphs as an artist wins all readers.

In *Geeta and the Village School* (Parvathi Thampi) children of six, seven, and eight will recognize that Geeta, in her far-off Indian village, is not unlike themselves in her reluctance to face the unknown. But when this story is read to them, the sixes and sevens will need additional information in order to sense the way of life and realize what a triumph it is for Geeta to overcome her fears and go to school in a village that never had a school before.

Karoleena in *Karoleena's Red Coat* (Charlotte Steiner) is familiar too, though she lived in Austria many years ago. Because she wore the only red coat in the class, it took all her own perseverance and all the tact of her teacher, Sister Wilhelmina, to win for her acceptance in six-year-old society.

Two groups of books of very different kinds come from England and from Spain. *Ant and Bee* (Angelo Banner) and its sequels (see Banner) probably bear as much relationship to English procedures for teaching reading as some of the formula-type materials in this country bear to our educational system. As stories they originated in word lists, and they are amusing despite the disjointedness such an approach invites. The humor is definitely British in flavor.

A First Look at the Country in Spain (A. J. M. and F. Goico Aguirre) is translated from the Spanish. Its full-page pictures are lovely in color and present characteristic scenes, though there is a slight tendency to caricature the people. Some first grade children could read it with help, and it places very well at second grade level, but it should by all means be available to third grade children and to intermediate classes in social studies. *A First Look at a City* (Aguirre) is appropriate for all primary grades. There is nothing like it among our American books, although some excellent primary books deal with single phases of city life. Others (see Aguirre) of this series are quite individual.

The clear purpose of developing better human relationships appears in certain books. *All the Children of the World* (Helen Doss) is a treatise on respect for differences. That the author has truly lived what she believes is known from her adult book, *The Family Nobody Wanted.* The inveterate reader among children will read *All the Children,* if he chances upon it, but it is more usable perhaps, in the hands of the adult, presenting it a little at a time, as a basis for discussion with the five, sixes, and sevens. It may have definite use in the hands of the parent of a child who knows he is adopted.

Her second book, *Friends Around the World* (Doss) is slightly more concrete and deals with more striking differences. The pictures, like the text, follow conventionalized patterns. Both books are most likely to be used for definite ethical and religious teaching and will be enlivened by the teacher's contribution.

Negro Children

Better relations in our own country have something added in *Nappy's Happy Friend* (Inez Hogan). In this book Nappy goes to the dump (parents might question this), but in his scavenging he makes a new friend, Tommy. At Tommy's home he meets Tommy's big brother, who plays the harmonica, and his two little sisters who can dance. This leads to plans for a show in the barn. Nappy and Tommy invite the Wong boys, too, to do their tumbling act. That Tommy and his brother and sisters are colored and the Wong boys are Chinese—these differences are left to the appealing pictures to reveal. Mixed acting troupe plays to mixed audience in a childlike and wholesome story.

A long forward step in treatment of Negroes in children's books is taken in *Tony's Birds* (Millicent Selsam), an informal guide for young bird watchers. Tony learns to look, to listen, to memorize significant features, to look up the bird in the bird guide, to use field glasses, and finally, from his friend Ken, to call birds. Only the pictures indicate that Tony and his father, who guides his bird interests, are Negroes and that Tony's friend, Ken, is white. The Negro child and his family with cultural interests and middle class orientation have been strikingly absent from children's books in the past.

While this book will go along best with class or individual bird study, it will be of individual interest to many small readers who question, "Why don't they ever have colored children in the books?"

FOUR What They Offer for First Grade

Certain qualities mark the forty or so books that seem most nearly suited to first grade use. Not only are they the simplest in text, with briefest vocabularies and most repetition, but pictures and text tend to be highly coordinated, language appeals to the child's ear, situations are familiar, and some of them relate to first year school experiences. These books call for new ways of helping the child to read or perhaps for more use of ways thoughtful teachers and parents have always used. For instance, there are the sharing of the reading by child and adult, and also the first reading by the adult, when the language pattern is unfamiliar or the words are not part of the child's vocabulary of understanding. Such reading, with the small child's propensity to memorize what he hears, often leads him to the "read-for-myself" stage. Suggestions are made in this chapter in the notes on individual books.

Pictures That Tell

The easiest books for all seem to be those in which the pictures furnish most specific help. The pictures tell the story in *The Friendly Animals* (Louis Slobodkin). There is one sentence to a page, such as, "The dog is our friend," "And so is the cat," and the pictures with their intriguing detail are right there to interpret the words. By way of contrast, the sequel, *Our Friendly Friends* (Slobodkin), has such content as, "Some are called Dobbin, Robin and Kitty, Owl and Garter Snake, Butterfly Pretty, Cricket and Mouse." The language is that of a read-to book. Whether or not one was intended for beginning readers and the other for the preschool group, the two books exemplify the difference.

My Red Umbrella (Robert Bright) has another important type of illustration, words directly cued to the pictures. It is a tiny book with black and white pictures as background for the red umbrella which expands in the rain to cover a little dog, two kittens, three chickens, four rabbits, and so on. The first two pages, and certain others, will be read by the adult first time around, but most pages the beginning reader, with the pictures and a very little help, will get for himself.

The pictures are the chief attraction of *Spring Is Here* (Lois Lenski), sheer enjoyment for both preschool and primary children. Heard first as a read-to, it will be used later by the same children for the pictures, developed in simple lines and colors but so detailed that they will be "read" at length and over and over. The verse is not adapted to read-to-myself purposes, but most listeners will memorize it quickly.

In *Who Will Be My Friends?* (Syd Hoff), Freddy undertakes to make friends in his neighborhood in just one sentence to a page for thirty pages. He is successful with the boys because he can toss a ball and catch it. A real problem of childhood is portrayed in the simplest language and with perfect matching of pictures and words. Happily, second and third grade boys who have not attained second or third grade reading ability will read this story too.

In *A Little Old Man* (Natalie Norton), the pictures develop the story and the language is direct. Children from preschool through upper primary can appreciate the little old man's good luck in having a houseboat washed up on his island with a family of cats aboard. The book has a place as read-for-myself on the first grade reading table, only because the pictures relate the story so completely. A few pages have very brief lines that the small reader will take over such as, "They went fishing in the little boat."

Of course this book, and many that are labeled 2-1 and above, will be read easily by some six-year-olds. The first grade children with special aptitude should, of course, have access to the books that are scaled up in the list.

Just for Fun (Patricia Scarry) is made up of fifteen miniature dramas. Rabbits, raccoons, squirrels, and other small creatures play the parts of children in an unusual coordination of pictures and text. The pictures tell the story, and the child will return to them again and again to study their endless detail. If he has begun to read, he will tend to attach the memorized expression to the page; this is a step in reading for himself.

Some of the words are surprising—*knight, monster, yo ho!*—and the adult helper will have to supply them on first reading. But they will "stick" because of the precise relationship of words to pictures.

Where's the Bunny? (Ruth Carroll) is a true starting book, detailing the adventures of the hiding bunny and the chasing puppy in a single line to a page. The engaging pictures supply the cues, and beginners will work through the text with a little help; after one or two trials they will read it for themselves. Although it has primer-like text, it is also delightful for kindergarten and preschool children. Such a book used as a read-to may well be embellished by child and helper in "story" language on the more literal pages, but a line such as "Up the stairs they go, hoppity, hoppity, hop," should be read from the book.

Around the Year (Tasha Tudor) has about 130 running words, but it is not on this basis that it is suitable for first grade. "In August southward swallows fly. Summer's waning, fall is nigh," is not language for beginning readers. It is the enchanting detail of the pictures that will occupy the "reader." Despite New England farmland setting and costumes from long ago, the child will interpret the games and seasonal activities, seeking out all the birds and animals half-hidden in the decorative borders. Realism is touched with dreams in the delicate pastel colors in the author-artist's own distinctive style. The brief text will be memorized quickly, and presently the child will "read" as he turns the pages.

The Cat Who Thought He Was a Tiger (Polly Cameron) is brief as to text, and the story has pull. The pictures are child-style drawings without perspective. Certain pages can be read, with the help of the pictures, by readers in the earliest stages—"They all ate together; they all played together."

The Boy Who Drew Birds (Polly Cameron) is more difficult, but the pictures tell the story in such perfect sequence that the text might almost be omitted. Certain pages are easy enough for the first grader—"UP flew the birds. DOWN flew the boy."

Language That Charms

Some stories are so easily memorized that the child learns them after a few hearings, and reading them is just a next step. *The Old*

Woman and Her Pig (Paul Galdone) is a delight to small listeners. Cumulative development provides for repetition; certain sentences could not be more starkly simple, "But the dog would not," "But the butcher would not." A first grade child with minimum skills and very small sight vocabulary quickly becomes familiar with this version. To connect the passages that ring in his ears to the print on the page requires the aid of teacher, parent, or even an older child. Left to himself he might simply relive the story again and again in the pictures. But with a "resource person" by his side to assist in anticipating the next step and to tell him words he does not know, he can read for himself, perhaps in several brief sessions, the single sentences and the earliest speeches. Then, with help, he can see how these elements are repeated in the longer passages.

Everything Is Somewhere (Mircea Vasiliu) is another example of language that lends itself to early reading. Poetic expression and closely matching pictures make it a book to read over and over. Through hearing it read, the first grade child will memorize some of the pages, and this may easily lead to his reading these pages for himself.

When I Grow Up (Lois Lenski) contains two-line verses, followed by the same set to music, and includes most of the vocations that small boys and girls choose from day to day. Singing the couplets results in memorizing them, and they easily become reading material for first grade and above. The book is also appealing to preschool children.

Certain books have compelling qualities both in pictures and in language. *The Wing on a Flea* (Ed Emerly), planned to awaken children to an awareness of shapes, tells its story in pictures so complete that a child can "read" it for himself. Child eyes will catch more quickly than adults that "a triangle—is the nose on a cat," as well as an "ice cream cone." As the text in verse is very brief, it will remain in the child's mind and in many cases be memorized. Applying the memorized verse to the pictures and the printed page is a stage of reading suitable to first graders even if they do not recognize all the individual words.

Gone Is My Goose (Dorothy Koch) is in simple and poetic style. It has few lines to a page, but the words are not in the natural order; the language is not what the child speaks or ordinarily hears, and to enjoy it he must hear it read aloud. But because the text is brief, the child may learn some parts and then read them. The illustrations as well as the language are impressionistic.

Things That One Knows

In *The Little Black Puppy* (Charlotte Zolotow), the antics of the puppy are familiar to most first graders. Realistic and colorful pictures interspersed with the text give cues to the words. The story starts, as beginners' stories should, with short sentences, first one, then two to a page. When longer units are reached, some vocabulary has been developed, and suspense has been built up to pull the reader through the more difficult pages, provided someone tells him such words as *male, circles, fetch,* and *agreed.* The puppy is a rascal, but he grows up and learns dog ways to the relief of the little boy, his master.

How a Seed Grows (Helene J. Jordan) has extreme simplicity of style, a small amount of text, and pictures coordinated perfectly with words and phrases. It details, step by step, a simple classroom activity for science learning–sprouting beans in eggshells.

Tell Me Some More (Crosby Newell Bonsall) combines in an ingenious pattern fantasy and realism, furnishes much opportunity for repetition of sentences and phrases, and offers an intriguing approach to acquaintance with the library.

Let's Find Out What the Signs Say (Martha and Charles Shapp) is just right for the new reader who is surrounded by reading matter everywhere he looks: signs that tell *where,* signs that tell *which way,* signs that walk, signs that fly! The book has about 100 different words in text but many more on the signs.

My Own Little House (Merriman B. Kaune), a simple book with child-style drawings of a house, not only is suited to first grade reading, but it is likely also to stimulate readers to extend their own house drawing into more imaginative efforts.

Two books show by contrast the importance of familiarity. *Chester* (Syd Hoff), in trying to make a place for himself at the fire station, on the merry-go-round, and other places where a horse isn't wanted, has adventures so absurd as to intrigue the most unimaginative first grader. With its brief text and familiar settings the story is one he *can* read. However, *Albert, the Albatross* (Hoff), designed as an Early-I-Can-Read-Book, introduces an unknown bird and some unfamiliar situations and, despite its briefer vocabulary and shorter length, is more difficult than *Chester.* Of course, the purpose here is not to suggest that every book should be written at the lowest level of readability! It is rather to try to determine what factors make for easiest reading.

Company's Coming for Dinner (Myra Berry Brown) is a realistic story of a small boy helping his mother get ready for company dinner and later lying in bed thinking how noisy the grown-ups are downstairs. The first person narrative is unusual to beginning books and in this case is effective. Certain pages can be read by the first grade child when someone shares the book with him, but most of it requires second grade reading ability.

My Daddy's Visiting Our School Today (Myra Berry Brown) is planned to review nursery school activities and as such would be read to the preschool or kindergarten child, but it may be used as a read-for-myself by the first grader; the games, blocks, climbing bars, and morning snack are to be found in the classrooms of *some* fortunate first graders. Also, Peter's recognition of the abilities of each of his playmates—Sue can remember all the words, Eric can cry the loudest—is important to six-year-olds!

Hurry, Hurry (Edith Thacher Hurd) in its opening sentences "Good-bye, dear Mother. Good-bye, dear Father," suggests an old-fashioned tale, but Susie proves to be a competent modern who gets Miss Mugs out of the troubles that hurrying gets her into. The story has simple vocabulary, controlled sentence structure, and "built-in" repetition; the absurd situations and grotesque pictures of Miss Mugs carry the reader along. While it deals with the world that the child knows, not the land of giants and fairies, the story nevertheless has Miss Mugs getting scooped up in a steam shovel and being stuck up with glue so that she can't say "Hurry!" Doubtless many a child delights in imagining his adults into similar positions.

Parts One Can Read

There are a number of books which the first grader can read to a limited extent. Parents and teachers in handling these "in-part" books will read most of the material and let the child read such pages or sentences as he can.

All Kinds of Time (Harry Behn) has a mixture of facts about clocks and their uses and purposes and a certain measure of child-size philosophy. Both text and pictures are stylized, and the whole is better read to the child by the adult, but a few of the pages with very brief text and coordinated pictures can be read by pupils in grade one.

The Brave Cowboy (Joan Walsh Anglund) has few words, inviting pictures, and a story at the child's level. It is really a "lap-book" for the very young, but first graders will enjoy it, especially two children poring over it together and reading the pages that have single phrases or very brief sentences cued to the pictures. *Cowboy and His Friend* (Anglund), a sequel, is similar in level and in appeal.

A more gaily absurd story would be hard to imagine than *The Unhappy Hippopotamus* (Nancy Moore). Miss Harriet Hippopotamus, forsaking the river bank and her hippo personality, goes voluminously garbed for every kind of human occasion, from riding a merry-go-round to decorating a Christmas tree. But she finds she cannot be happy out of her element, and her friend mouse helps her to find her hippo-self again.

It is the structure of this story that brings it into the read-it-myself category. One of its features is lists of things liked by young readers. When Miss Harriet visits a candy store, she sees *jelly beans, candy corn, jawbreakers,* and the like for fifteen items. When she goes to play, she *slides down trees,* she *jumps rope,* she *turns somersaults,* and does many other things. There are a dozen or more of these lists, and children delight in them. Following one or two repetitions, they supply the items while the adult reader waits. The next step for the individual reader is to locate the lists by the pictures and read them for himself.

Millions and Millions (Louis Slobodkin) has pictures so precisely illustrating its verses that beginning beginners can read it with a word supplied just here and there:

> There are millions of stars
> and millions of cars
> and millions of dogs and cats,
> There are millions of beds
> and millions of heads
> and millions of bonnets
> and hats!

Each line has a page to itself and *millions* of appropriate pictures!

With some help the first grader, who has made a beginning, can read *Let's Find Out What's Light and What's Heavy* (Martha and Charles Shapp). The sentences and pictures are perfectly placed, but even with a picture such a general statement as, "The same thing may be light sometimes and heavy at other times," must be read by the adult helper first time around. However, the sentence that follows, cued to the picture, almost reads itself, "The bag is light when it is empty."

In *Pear-Shaped Hill* (Irving A. Leitner), the cartoon-like, highly colored pictures and nonsense narrative offer a certain amount of reading opportunity by way of pictured lists: "a big bumblebee, a cat on a pole, a dog in a hole." Some of the connecting paragraphs are less direct and should be read first by the "helper."

Everyone Has a Name (Richard Browner) invites the cooperation of the "helper" and the reader with this construction,

> You can teach him a trick, like catching a stick. His name is DOG.
> She takes her nap in your warm, cozy lap. Her name is CAT.

The beginner catches the cue and can do his part even on the first reading. Unusual pictures and lavish color contribute to the interest.

Different and appealing are *Nothing But Cats, Cats, Cats* (Grace Skaar) and *All About Dogs, Dogs, Dogs* (Skaar) with their very slight text and gay pictures.

The Wonderful House (Margaret Wise Brown) is readable by the first grader for a few pages, but then the lines of text cease to be predictable by either pictures or logic and require at least second grade skill to read them.

The Picture Dictionary (Alta McIntire) is a true gift to starters. The pictures give the clue, and the *very* beginner may be proud of his ability to name the words.

Busy Bodies (Clare Bowman) is marked by directness and brevity of statement. Illustrations appropriate to the text and characters from airplane pilots to zoo keepers, busy at their jobs, make up an "alphabet career book." The factual text deals with material innately interesting to young readers. Selected pages can be read by first graders, all of it by second graders.

Books for the first grade will continue to offer the greatest challenge to writers, illustrators, editors, and publishers. Uses of books for independent reading by children in their first year in school demand of the teacher some rethinking of the techniques of teaching reading. The typical six-year-old of today has wider experience and much larger vocabularies of understanding and of oral use than the six-year-old of earlier decades. He requires, therefore, new types of reading material. Parents, too, may find new ways, natural ways, of aiding the beginner in his reading progress, with a variety of books for his use.

Nothing in this section should suggest limiting the first-year reader to the books labeled 1-1 or 1-2. Some six-year-olds, of course, will reach up into the books of the longer list and into general library books. They should be encouraged to do so.

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*Key

1-1 first grade–first half of year
1-2 first grade–second half of year
2-1 second grade–first half
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3-2 third grade–second half
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LIST OF PUBLISHERS

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6 West 57th Street, New York 19, New York
Abingdon Press
201 Eighth Avenue South, Nashville 3, Tennessee
Beginner Books
A Division of Random House
457 Madison Avenue, New York 22, New York
Benefic Press
1900 North Narragansett, Chicago 39, Illinois
Childrens Press, Inc.
Jackson Blvd. and Racine Avenue, Chicago 7, Illinois
Thomas Y. Crowell Company
432 Park Avenue South, New York 16, New York
Dodd, Mead and Company
432 Park Avenue South, New York 16, New York
Doubleday and Company, Inc.
575 Madison Avenue, New York 22, New York
E. P. Dutton and Company, Inc.
300 Park Avenue, New York 10, New York
Follett Publishing Company
1010 West Washington Blvd., Chicago 7, Illinois
The Garrard Press
510-522 North Hickory Street, Champaign, Illinois
Golden Press, Inc.
850 Fifth Avenue, New York 20, New York
Grosset and Dunlap, Inc.
1107 Broadway, New York 10, New York
Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc.
750 Third Avenue, New York 17, New York
Harper and Brothers
49 East 33rd Street, New York 16, New York
Hastings House Publishers, Inc.
151 East 50th Street, New York 22, New York
Holiday House
8 West 13th Street, New York 11, New York
Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc.
383 Madison Avenue, New York 17, New York

Houghton Mifflin Company
  2 Park Street, Boston 7, Massachusetts

Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.
  501 Madison Avenue, New York 22, New York

J. B. Lippincott Company
  521 Fifth Avenue, New York 17, New York

Little, Brown and Company
  34 Beacon Street, Boston 6, Massachusetts

The Macmillan Company
  60 Fifth Avenue, New York 11, New York

McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc.
  Whittlesey House
  Books for Young People
  330 West 42nd Street, New York 36, New York

David McKay Company, Inc.
  119 West 40th Street, New York 18, New York

William Morrow and Company, Inc.
  425 Park Avenue South, New York 16, New York

Ivan Obolensky, Inc.
  219 East 61st Street, New York 21, New York

Pantheon Books
  333 Sixth Avenue, New York 14, New York

G. P. Putnam's Sons
  Coward-McCann, Inc.
  The John Day Company, Inc.
  200 Madison Avenue, New York 16, New York

Rand McNally and Company
  405 Park Avenue, New York 22, New York

The Reilly and Lee Company
  14 East Jackson Blvd., Chicago, Illinois

Charles Scribner's Sons
  597 Fifth Avenue, New York 17, New York

Vanguard Press
  424 Madison Avenue, New York 17, New York

Henry Z. Walck, Inc.
  101 Fifth Avenue, New York 3, New York

Franklin Watts, Inc.
  575 Lexington Avenue, New York 22, New York

Whitman Publishing Company
1220 Mound Avenue, Racine, Wisconsin

Wonder Books, Inc.
1107 Broadway, New York 10, New York

Young Scott Books, Inc.
8 West 13th Street, New York 11, New York

Reprinted from *ELEMENTARY ENGLISH*, April, 1963

Elizabeth Guilfoile

One Hundred More Books for Beginning Readers*

Adam, Barbara *The Big, Big Box* Illustrated by the author. Doubleday 1960 $2.00 2.2

When the children have had their fun with the box, Patter, the cat, takes possession for her family.

Asheron, Sara *Surprise in the Tree* Illustrated by Susan Perl. Wonder 1962 $.59. 2.1

Jerry's success surprises himself and everyone else.

Barker, Melvern *Shipshape Boy* Illustrated by the author. Scribners 1961 $2.95. 2.2

Life aboard a tugboat as seen by Tom who wants to grow up to be its skipper.

Barr, Catherine *Seven Chicks missing* Illustrated by the author. Walck 1962 $2.25. 2.2

Proud Mother Grouse, parading her chicks, lost them, but with a little help she found them again.

Belmont, Pauline *Law, The Police Horse* Illustrated by Ted Russell. Reilly 1962 $2.75. 1.2

Full page photographs and very brief factual text for young horse lovers.

Beyer, Ernestine Cobern *The Story of Little-Big* Illustrated by Vee Guthrie. Reilly 1962 $2.75. 2.2

After Little-Big had sought far and wide for a playmate, he found one at home in the wigwam.

Black, Irma Simonton *Big Puppy and Little Puppy* Illustrated by Theresa Sherman. Holiday 1960 $2.50. 2.2

Each puppy gets a new notion of his own size when out in the world he meets other animals.

Brown, Bill and Rosalie *Tickly and the Fox* Illustrated by Haris Petie. Lantern 1962 $2.75. 2.2

Tickly was a suprised little cat when the fox ran terrified from his claws.

Buff, Mary and Conrad *Forest Folk* Illustrated by Conrad Buff. Viking 1962 $3.00. 3.1

Poetic language and exquisite drawings. A young buck fights in the forest for control of the herd.

Burch, Robert *A Funny Place to Live* Illustrated by W. R. Lohse. Viking 1962 $2.50. 2.2

Animal homes compared to peoples' houses in a tale interwoven of fantasy and realism.

Brod, Ruth and Stan *How Would You Act?* Illustrated by Stan Brod. Rand 1962 $2.75. 1.2

Nonsense rhymes and repetition combine to make for easy reading.

Cameron, Polly *"I Can't" Said the Ant* Illustrated by the author. Coward-McCann 1961 $2.52 net. 2.1

The reading, with matching pictures, is to be shared by child and adult.

Cass, Joan *The Cat Thief* Illustrated by William Stobbs. Abelard-Schuman 1961 $2.95. 3.2

A quiet tale despite its title, reflecting English background.

Cavanah, Frances *Our Country's Story* Illustrated by Julia Keats. Rand 1962 $2.95. 3.1

Consecutive history through selected episodes from Columbus to the present.

Clark, Ann Nolan *The Desert People* Illustrated by Allan Houser. Viking 1962 $3.00. 3.2

The march of the seasons in his own desert, in simple and poetic language for the young Papago Indian to read.

Clifford, Eth and David *No Pigs, No Possums, No Pandas* Illustrated by Eth Clifford. Putnam 1962 $2.68. 3.1

Animals in black and white photographs, with appropriate story.

Colver, Anne *Abraham Lincoln* Illustrated by William Moyers. Garrard 1960 $2.25. 3.1

Familiar stories of Lincoln's childhood.

Davis, Lavinia R. *Clown Dog* Illustrated by Paul Lantz. Doubleday 1961 $2.75. 2.2

Joey's faith in his pet won friends for himself and his dog.

de Borhegyi, Suzanne *Museums* Illustrated by Leonard Kessler. Holt 1962 $2.50. 3.2

From a museum of 2,200 years ago to the varied museums of today.

DeJong, David Cornell *The Happy Birthday Egg* Illustrated by Harvey Weiss. Little, Brown 1962 $2.97. 2.2

Mystery story, solution not stated. Sequel to *The Happy Birthday Umbrella.*

Dolch, Edward W. and Dolch, Marguerite P. *Once There Was a Bear* Illustrated by Gerald McCann. Garrard 1962 $2.00. 2.2

Stories making use of the universal interest in bears.

Dolch, Edward W. and Dolch, Marguerite P. *Once There Was a Dog* Illustrated by Tom O'Sullivan. Garrard 1962 $2.00. 2.2

Folk tales from many cultures, simply written.

Dolch, Edward W. and Dolch, Marguerite P. *Stories from India* Illustrated by Gordon Laite. Garrard 1961 $2.75. 3.3

Folk Tales simplified to third grade reading level.

Dolch, Edward W. *Once There Was a Monkey* Illustrated by Kenyon Shannon. Garrard 1962 $2.00. 2.2

Folk tales from many countries about monkeys.

Duvoisin, Roger *The Miller, His Son, and Their Donkey* Illustrated by the author. Whittlesey 1962 $2.50. 3.1

Rotund characters in country dress and a very small grey donkey illustrate a version of the old tale.

Emberley, Ed *The Parade Book* Illustrated by the author. Little, Brown 1962 $2.95. 2.2

All kinds of parades shown in clean color, wonderfully detailed line drawings, and straightforward text.

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*Supplement to *Books for Beginning Readers* National Council of Teachers of English, 1962.

Dr. Guilfoile is Lecturer in Children's Literature, Miami University, Norwood Center, Norwood, Ohio.

One Hundred More Books for Beginning Readers*

Evans, Eva Knox *That Lucky Mrs. Plucky* Illustrated by Jo Ann Stover. McKay 1961 $2.75 2.2

Mrs. Plucky, helped by Ellen and Andy, made room in her house for the cat family.

Farquhar, Margaret C. *Colonial Life in America* Illustrated by Ed. Emberley. Holt 1962 $2.50 3.1

Pages of history enlivened by fine-line drawings with color added.

Felt, Sue *Hello—Goodbye* Illustrated by the author. Doubleday 1960 $2.50. 3.1

The fun and the problems of leaving the old house for the new, presented realistically.

Fenton, Carroll Lane *Goldie Is a Fish* Illustrated by the author. John Day 1962 $2.68. 3.1

Precise drawings and rhythmic prose acquaint the young reader with many kinds of fish.

Fisher, Aileen *I Wonder How, I Wonder Why* Illustrated by Carol Barker. Abelard-Schuman 1962 $2.50. 3.1

A child's wonderings in delightful verse; unusual illustrations in brilliant color.

Fisher, Leonard Everett *Pumpers, Boilers, Hooks and Ladders* Illustrated by the author. Dial 1961 $2.75. 3.1

The history of fire engines dramatized in violent red and black pictures.

Fisher, Leonard Everett *Pushers, Spads, Jennies and Jets* Illustrated by the author. Dial 1961 $2.75. 3.1

The development of airplanes, sketchily told, with striking pictures.

Fisher, Margery M. *But Not Our Daddy* Illustrated by Leonard Everett Fisher. Dial 1962 $2.50. 2.1

The artist works at home and his children are captivated by his work tools. Engaging pictures.

Ford, Anne *Davy Crockett* Illustrated by Leonard Vosburgh, Putnam 1961 $2.19. 2.2

Adventures of the famous frontiersman from boyhood in the Tennessee woods to death at the Alamo.

Fox, Charles Phillip *Mr. Stripes the Gopher* Illustrated by the author. Reilly 1962 $2.75. 2.2

Photographic record of the striped ground squirrel and his family.

Francoise *The Big Rain* Illustrated by the author. Scribners 1961 $3.25. 2.2

Jean Marie, her family and the farm creatures, survive the flood, and the sun shines on the fields again.

Francoise *Minou* Illustrated by the author. Scribners 1962 $2.95. 2.2

Gentle story of a child who seeks her cat in the streets of Paris.

Funk, Tom *I Read Signs* Illustrated by the author. Holiday 1962 $2.50. 2.1

Pages of pictures with appropriate signs; natural reading matter for new readers.

Goudey, Alice E. *Sunnyvale Fair* Illustrated by Paul Galdone. Scribners 1962 $2.95. 2.2

Good story for readers who have attended a county fair.

Graves, Charles P. *Annie Oakley* Illustrated by Louis F. Cary. Garrard 1961 $2.25. 3.1

Biography of the great sharpshooter in exciting narrative.

Guilfoile, Elizabeth *Have You Seen My Brother?* Illustrated by Mary Stevens. Follett 1962 $1.14. 1.2

Andrew finds his brother in an unexpected place.

Heilbroner, Joan *The Happy Birthday Present* Illustrated by Mary Chalmers. Harper 1962 $1.95. 2.1

Two boys get their mother a birthday present.

Hoff, Syd *Little Chief* Illustrated by the author. Harper 1961 $1.95. 2.1

The settler's wagon brings playmates for the little Indian.

Hogan, Inez *Cubby Bear and the Book* Illustrated by the author. Dutton 1961 $2.50. 1.1

A book to be read to the children with a section that they can share in reading.

Holland, Joyce *Mandy Monkey* Illustrated by Lawrence Spiegel. Denison 1962 $2.75. 3.1

Mandy learns not to hoard when her cocoanuts topple down on her. Didactic but amusing.

Holland, Joyce *Patty the Porpoise* Illustrated by Lawrence Spiegel. Denison 1962 $2.75. 3.1

Story a bit didactic but pictures rhythmical and dramatic.

Hughes, Peter *The Emperor's Oblong Pancake* Illustrated by Gerald Rose. Abelard-Schuman 1961 $2.95. 3.2

In this lengthy, episodic, humorous tale the emperor finally learns something.

Hurd, Edith Thacher *Stop, Stop,* Illustrated by Clement Hurd. Harper 1961 $1.95. 2.1

Suzie and Miss Mugs of *Hurry, Hurry* have their troubles at the zoo.

Hurley, William *Dan Frontier, Trapper* Illustrated by Jack Boyd. Benefic 1962 $2.20. 2.2

Lively western from a series written for older slow readers.

Ipcar, Dahlov *Stripes and Spots* Illustrated by the author. Doubleday 1961 $2.50. 3.1

Jungle green makes a brilliant backdrop for striped tiger and spotted leopard, each on his first hunt. Appealing text.

Kessler, Ethel and Leonard *Do Baby Bears Sit in Chairs?* Illustrated by Leonard Kessler. Doubleday 1961 $2.50. 1.2

That bears, cats, and kangaroos can share his own familiar experiences is an enchanting notion to listener or reader.

Kessler, Leonard *The Duck on the Truck* Illustrated by the author. Wonder 1961 $.59. 2.1

Jack's duck won out by quacking at the right time and place.

Kirn, Ann *Two Pesos for Catalina* Illustrated by the author. Rand 1962 $2.95. 3.1

A trip to Taxco with money to spend is Catalina's big event.

Kitt, Tamara *The Secret Cat* Illustrated by William Russell. Wonder 1961 $.59. 2.1

The cat helped to find a present for the Queen's birthday.

Kravetz, Nathan *A Horse of Another Color* Illustrated by Susan Perl. Little, Brown 1962 $2.95. 2.2

Henry's blue horse puzzled everyone but Henry.

Kumin, Maxine *Follow the Fall* Illustrated by Arthur Marokvia. Putnam 1961 $2.50. 2.2

Verses relating to seasonal school activities with gay three-color pictures.

Kumin, Maxine *Mittens in May* Illustrated by Elliott Gilbert. Putnam 1962 $2.00. 2.2

Peter had a reason for clinging to his mittens but when an important job needed doing he could forget them.

Lenski, Lois *Policeman Small* Illustrated by the author. Walck 1962 $2.25. 2.1

Addressed by the author to "the children of the children who first loved Mr. Small."

Levarie, Norma *I Had a Little . . .* Illustrated by John Wright. Random 1961 $1.95. 1.2

Delightful whimsy in verse. Rhymes, with pictures, provide clues to reading.

Lexau, Joan *Olaf Reads* Illustrated by Harvey Weiss. Dial 1961 $2.75. 2.1

Olaf's delightful and improbable enthusiasm for reading may affect his contemporaries.

Lubell, Winifred and Cecil *Rosalie the Bird Market Turtle* Illustrated by the authors. Rand 1962 $2.95. 3.1

Good story. Paris setting.

Marks, Mickey Klar *What Can I Buy?* Illustrated by Aliki. Dial 1962 $2.50. 2.1

Most of the fun of spending money is in the choosing.

Martin, Patricia Miles *The Raccoon and Mrs. McGinnis* Illustrated by Leonard Weisgard. Putnam 1961 $2.19. 2.2

In helping Mrs. McGinnis the raccoon keeps to his character as a raccoon.

Martin, Patricia Miles *Show and Tell* Illustrated by Tom Hamil. Putnam 1962 $2.00. 2.1

Jeffrey surprises himself, as well as teacher and classmates, with his exhibit.

Martini, Teri *What a Frog Can Do* Illustrated by Jo Polseno. Reilly 1962 $2.50. 2.1

A gay story, with lively pictures, hampered a bit by primer-style text.

Meeker, Alice M. *How Hospitals Help Us* Illustrated by Jack Faulkner. Benefic 1962 $1.26 net. 2.2

Details of the workings of hospitals suited to young children.

Miles, Miska *Dusty and the Fiddlers* Illustrated by Erik Blegvad. Little, Brown 1962 $2.95. 3.1

Humorous tale of old-time feuding and a family of stranded fiddlers.

Minarik, Else Holmelund *Little Bear's Visit* Illustrated by Maurice Sendak. Harper 1961 $1.95. 2.2

In this fourth story of Little Bear he visits his grandparents.

Moore, Lilian *A Pickle for a Nickel* Illustrated by Susan Perl. Golden 1961 $1.00. 2.1

An original and engaging story. After first page or two the reader can go on his own.

Myller, Rolf *How Big is a Foot?* Illustrated by the author. Atheneum 1962 $2.95. 2.1

Imaginative, amusing and almost convincing, is this history of the foot as a unit of measure.

Nelson, Lee *All The Sounds We Hear* Illustrated by Audrey Zinser Ashley. Steck 1960 $2.00. 2.2

Realistic pictures carry the text which has many easy pages.

Olds, Helen D. *What Will I Wear?* Illustrated by Lisl Weil. Knopf 1961 $2.50. 2.2

Interesting to little girls of the age to read it.

Palazzo, Tony, Illustrator *The Four Musicians* Doubleday 1962 $1.50. 3.1

Stirring pictures in vivid color add to the gayety and excitement of the old tale.

Parsons, Virginia *Rain* Illustrated by the author. Doubleday 1961 $1.25. 1.2

Vigorous pictures of people, animals, plants, and even things rejoicing in the rain, and simple story.

Phleger, Fred *Red Tag Comes Back* Illustrated by Arnold Lobel. Harper 1961 $1.95. 2.2

Life cycle of the salmon as seen by Aku, an Indian boy.

Politi, Leo *Moy Moy* Illustrated by the author. Scribners 1960 $3.25. 3.1

Life in Chinatown pictured in radiant color and centering upon the children's part in the New Year celebration.

Reit, Seymour *Where's Willie?* Illustrated by Erik Blegvad. Golden 1961 $1.00. 2.1

An original story with a surprise ending.

Rogers, Cedric *Rags, Bottles and Bones* Illustrated by the author. McKay 1962 $2.95. 2.2

A story to delight the collector, aged five or fifty.

Schatz, Letta *When Will My Birthday Be?* Illustrated by Richard Bergere. McGraw 1962 $2.50. 2.2

Benjy's year of waiting for his birthday is symbolized by changes in the apple tree.

Schlein, Miriam *The Pile of Junk* Illustrated by Harvey Weiss. Abelard-Schuman 1962 $2.75. 3.1

Junk to one proves treasure to others when the little old lady cleans house.

Spilka, Arnold *Aloha From Bobby* Illustrated by the author. Walck 1962 $3.50. 2.2

Charming sketches of Hawaii and simple text show Bobby in pursuit of a purpose.

Tarcov, Edith *A Train for Tommy* Illustrated by William Russell. Wonder 1962 $.59. 2.1

After rides in the car, on a motorbike, and on a plane Tommy still wants to ride on a train, and does.

Thompson, Vivian L. *Camp-in-the-Yard* Illustrated by Brinton Turkle. Holiday 1961 $2.50. 2.2

The twins, when they can't go camping with their big brother, camp at home and night brings adventures.

Thompson, Vivian L. *Kimo Makes Music* Illustrated by Frances Walter. Golden Gate 1962 $2.75. 3.1

This gay and child-like story of Hawaii may awaken other children to the natural musical instruments around them.

Thompson, Vivian L. *The Horse That Liked Sandwiches* Illustrated by Aliki. Putnam 1962 $2.19. 2.2

A story for sheer enjoyment. Lively pictures in cartoon style.

Udry, Janice *Is Susan Here?* Illustrated by Peter Edwards. Abelard-Schuman 1962 $2.50. 2.2

Gay pretend story, suited to pre-school listeners, and to read for themselves later.

Vacheron, Edith and Kahl, Virginia *More About Henri!* Illustrated by Virginia Kahl. Scribners 1961 $2.95. 2.2

Henry and Michel, the cat, converse their way through amusing adventures. *Encore Henri!* is the French version.

Von Hippel, Ursula *The Story of the Snails Who Traded Houses* Illustrated by the author. Coward-McCann 1961 $2.19. 1.1

A tiny book with exquisite illustrations and rhythmic text.

Vaughan, Sam *New Shoes* Illustrated by Cyndy Szekeres. Doubleday 1961 $2.95. 2.1

This story skips to a tune, though not always in time, and has colorful illustrations.

Wasserman, Selma and Jack *Sailor Jack and the Ball Game* Illustrated by William Lackey. Benefic 1962 $1.68. 2.2

Bluebell, the parrot, helps the sailors from the submarine to win the ball game. One of a series.

Watson, Aldren A. *My Garden Grows* Illustrated by the author. Viking 1962 $2.50. 3.2

Descriptions of common vegetables in the child gardener's language.

Watson, Jane Werner (as told by Kenneth S. Norris) *The Whale Hunt* Illustrated by Claude Humbert. Golden 1960 $1.00. 2.2

Verse rather well adapted to telling a tale at this level.

Watts, Mabel *Weeks and Weeks* Illustrated by Abner Graboff. Abelard-Schuman 1962 $2.75. 3.1

Paint-up week, hot-dog week, fly-a-kite and other weeks left no weeks for living, until Suzy, Stephen and Mr. Hobbs did something about it.

Wise, William *The Cowboy Surprise* Illustrated by Paul Galdone. Putnam 1961 $2.19. 2.2

A story to reconcile children to wearing glasses. The pictures do most to accomplish the purpose.

Wondriska, William *Which Way to the Zoo?* Illustrated by the author. Holt 1961 $1.50. 1.2

Simple tale with natural repetition. Unusual colors, black and red on brown kraft pages.

Woodward, Hildegard *The House on Grandfather's Hill* Illustrated by the author. Scribner 1961 $3.25. 2.2

Eric learned equipment and processes as he watched road building, excavation, and the building of his new home.

Young, Miriam *Please Don't Feed Horace* Illustrated by Abner Graboff. Dial 1961 $2.75. 3.1

Good story, despite the pictures, and important to all zoo goers.

Zimmerman, Naoma and Schuyler, Ruby *Corky in Orbit* Illustrated by Carol Wilde. Reilly 1962 $2.50. 3.1

Facts of space flight supply the background for a story of two boys in orbit.